

You must stay in some type of education or training until you are 18. There are many options available when you turn 16. Look at what option best suits you and your situation, strengths and interests.

Post-16 Options: Continue your studies

A Levels (Level 3 Study)

A Levels allow you to study a subject you took at GCSE in greater depth or choose a new one like economics, law or psychology. You could take 3 broad subjects you are interested in to keep your career options open or choose ones you need for a specific career. A Levels last 2 years and assessment is mostly exams at the end of the course. Usually there is the option for one week of work experience during Year 12. A Levels leads to university/college, higher/degree apprenticeships and employment.

Applied Qualifications (Level 3 Study & below)

Applied Qualifications (e.g. BTECs, Applied A Levels and UALs) allow you to study qualifications that give you a broad overview of working in a specific sector, like business, media, engineering, leisure or science and technology. A mix of classroom-based learning with the chance to get some practical skills. Applied Qualifications can be worth 1-3 A Levels and there is the option to study them alongside A Levels. Applied Qualifications vary in length as they are course dependent and assessments are through coursework and exams. Work experience is course dependent. Applied Qualifications leads to university/college, higher/degree apprenticeships and employment.

Certain Applied Qualifications (e.g. BTECs and UALs) are also on offer at lower levels (e.g. Level 2 Study and below) if necessary due to GCSE grades.

T Levels (Level 3 Study)

T Levels are designed in partnership with employers to give you the skills and knowledge to get on in the workplace. Combines classroom learning with industry placements to prepare you for skilled work or higher level study. 1 T Level is the equivalent of 3 A levels. T Levels last 2 years and assessments are through exams, projects and practical assignments. There is at least 45 days of work experience through an industry placement. T Levels leads to university/college, higher/degree apprenticeships and employment.

Technical and Vocational Qualifications (Level 1 Study & above)

Technical and Vocational Qualifications (e.g. City & Guilds Diplomas, IMI and NVQs) are qualifications which teach you how to do tasks specifically related to the industry and role you want to be involved in. Technical and Vocational Qualifications vary in length as they are course dependent and assessments are through coursework, skills tests and exams. Work experience is course dependent. Technical and Vocational Qualifications leads to apprenticeships, employment and college/university.

Students would usually start on a Level 2+ course and complete Level 3 study after 2 years.

Exam retakes (Level 2 Study)

If you didn't get the results you wanted, you can re-sit some of your courses or sign up for some new qualifications at a school sixth form, sixth form college or further education college. Exam retakes last 1 year. Exam retakes leads to further/higher education, advanced/higher/degree apprenticeships and employment.

Post-16 Options: Combine work and study

Apprenticeships (Level 2 & above)

Intermediate, advanced, higher and degree Apprenticeships combine practical on-the-job skills training with off-the-job learning. Apprenticeships offer training that is relevant to the job and offer a paid salary. Apprenticeships start at intermediate level and offer support if you have special needs or a disability. Apprenticeships involve spending 80% of the time in the workplace and 20% of the time off-the-job with some study in a college, training centre or Institute of Technology (IoT) leading to a qualification. Apprenticeships last a minimum of 1 year. Apprenticeships leads to employment, next level of apprenticeship and further/higher education.

Traineeships

Traineeships are a course that includes a work placement that will get you ready for an apprenticeship or a job and are on offer for those aged 16-24 (or up to 25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan) with no higher than a Level 3 qualification. Traineeships offer work experience and some help to apply for next steps. Traineeships offer the opportunity to improve Maths and English skills and to gain Maths, English, digital and work-related qualifications. Traineeships involve spending a minimum of 70 hours in a work placement with the rest of the time in college or a training centre. Traineeships last from 6 weeks to 1 year. Traineeships leads to apprenticeships, employment and further education.

Supported Internships

Supported Internships are for those aged 16-24 with an Education, Health and Care Plan with learning difficulties or learning disabilities, who need extra support to get a job. Most of the time is spent on placements with an employer, learning skills for work. Supported Internships offer help from a tutor and a job coach in college or with a specialist provider and offer Maths and English GCSE qualifications. Supported Internships last a minimum of 6 months. Supported Internships leads to employment, traineeships and apprenticeships.

A LEVELS

The two most important criteria for choosing A levels are:

- What are you good at?
- What are you likely to enjoy?

If you are choosing a new subject, ensure that you find out as much as possible about it, speak to teachers, look at course content, and find out about what coursework and exams are involved.

Most university degree courses require certain A level grades and many specify A level subjects and GCSEs that you should have.

Think ahead to what you will be doing after A levels to help you choose the best subjects now. Choose subjects which will fit in with your career plans.

If you are not sure which career / degree course you wish to enter, try to choose a selection of subjects to allow you to keep options as open as possible.

Therefore when making your choices you should consider:

- The subjects that you are interested in.
- Your abilities, aptitudes and skills.
- How open you want to keep your career options.
- Which A level subjects are available at where you intend to study?

A levels at Urmston Grammar

Subjects on offer for 2022 entry (most students choose 3 subjects, exceptionally able students may choose 4 subjects): Art; Biology; Business Studies; Chemistry; Computer Science; Economics; English Language; English Literature; Food Science & Nutrition; French; Further Mathematics; Geography; German; Government & Politics; History; Mathematics; Music; Photography; Physical Education; Physics; Psychology; Religion, Philosophy & Ethics; Sociology.

To explore further information about the subjects on offer including entry requirements look at: [Urmston Grammar School - Sixth Form Virtual Open Evening - 2021](#)

Entry requirements for 2022 entry: 2x7 & 3x6 (including 2x5 in English Language & Maths) at GCSE. Certain A level subjects may require a 6 or above at GCSE.

A levels at a different 6th Form or College (e.g. 6th forms: Altrincham College, BTH, Flixton Girls, Sale Grammar, Stretford Grammar; Colleges: Loreto, Pendleton, Trafford, Xaverian).

Each 6th form and college will vary in terms of their A level subject offer (and may offer Applied A Levels, combining coursework/exams) and offer additional subjects that are not on offer at Urmston Grammar. 6th forms and colleges may also be on different exam boards and therefore course content will differ. Research options on local 6th form and college websites.

Entry requirements will also vary at different 6th forms and colleges. Some may ask for 2x6 & 4x5 or 3x5 & 3x4 at GCSE for example, whereas others may ask for higher grades than at Urmston Grammar. Certain A level subjects may require a 6 or above at GCSE.

BTECs (& Other Applied Qualifications, e.g. Applied A Levels and UALs)

Source: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/about-us/qualification-brands/btec.html>

Chosen by over 1 million learners every year, BTECs are career-based qualifications designed to give students the skills they need to move on to higher education (university or apprenticeships) or go straight into employment.

BTEC qualifications develop a range of practical knowledge and skills which help learners to prepare for, and progress in, their chosen career. Classroom style teaching combined with project work and practical, work-related activities help to develop students' behavioural skills, which can include teamwork, creative thinking and presentation skills.

Why study BTEC?

Many industry sectors have a set of National Occupational Standards that professionals must follow. The learning content of BTECs is built around these National Occupational Standards, which is why BTECs are recognised as valuable qualifications by the Standard Setting Body (SSB) and/or Sector Skills Council (SSC) for each industry.

How can I study a BTEC qualification post-16?

BTECs can be studied alongside, or instead of, A levels in certain school 6th Forms and Further Education colleges.

What levels of qualifications are there?

BTECs come in different levels, from Entry Level (Foundation Learning) right through to professional qualifications at Level 7 (equivalent to postgraduate study).

Level 3 (equivalent to A levels) often requires 5x4 (including English & Maths) at GCSE.

What subjects can I study?

BTECs are available across a range of subjects, including: Animal Management; Building Services Design; Business; Childcare; Computing; Construction; Engineering; Graphics; Health & Social Care; IT; Media; Science; Sports; Sport Science; Travel & Tourism; Uniformed Services (& many more).

Applied Qualifications (e.g. Applied A Levels & UALs) are available across a range of subjects, including: Applied Criminology; Applied Science; Art & Design; Creative Media Production & Technology; Music Performance & Production; Performing Arts (& many more)

How are BTECs graded?

BTECs are graded using a Pass (P), Merit (M), Distinction (D) and Distinction* (D*) scale. Depending on the size of your course, you may receive one, two or three grades. If the work you produce isn't of a high enough quality to pass with a P grade, you will be awarded a U, which means 'Unclassified'.

BTEC Nationals qualify for UCAS points for higher education.

How will I be assessed?

BTECs are made up of a number of units, which are usually assessed through assignments that are both set and marked by your teacher or course tutor. However, some newer BTECs contain externally marked tests (exams).

Assignments can include tests, research, essays, projects, investigations, artwork, fieldwork and experiments, and often link theory with practical exercises.

BTEC facts & statistics

74% of employers want new hires with practical knowledge and skills combined, 90% of BTEC students are employed full-time after graduating and 23% of students who went to university in 2018 had a BTEC.

T LEVELS (& Other Vocational and Technical Qualifications, e.g. C&G, IMI and NVQ)

Sources:

<https://www.tlevels.gov.uk/students> - can add postcode to find providers offering T Levels

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/introduction-of-t-levels/introduction-of-t-levels>

What are T Levels?

T Levels are a 2-year qualification (equivalent to 3 A Levels at Level 3) that can be taken as an alternative to A Levels, other post-16 courses or an apprenticeship. The government has developed T Levels to deliver world class technical education. They have been designed in partnership with businesses and employers to learn the skills and knowledge to succeed in the workplace. More than 200 businesses have been involved, including Fujitsu.

T Level courses will include a technical qualification, which will include core theory, concepts and skills for an industry area, and specialist skills and knowledge for an occupation or career, along with an industry placement with an employer and a minimum standard in Maths and English if not already achieved.

Why study T Levels?

T Levels involve more classroom study than apprenticeships, providing the opportunity to experience an industry and learn what a real career is like while continuing with studies. T Levels involve spending 80% of the time in the classroom and 20% on a 45 day (or 315 hours) minimum industry placement with a local employer to get ready for work.

What subjects can I study?

T Levels are available at selected colleges and schools in England. From Sept 2020: Design, Surveying and Planning for Construction; Digital Production, Design and Development; Education and Childcare. From Sep 2021: Building Services Engineering for Construction; Digital Business Services; Digital Support and Services; Health; Healthcare Science; Onsite Construction; Science. From Sept 2022: Accounting; Design and Development for Engineering and Manufacturing; Engineering, Manufacturing, Processing and Control; Finance; Maintenance, Installation and Repair for Engineering and Manufacturing; Management and Administration. From Sept 2023: Animal Care and Management; Agriculture, Land Management and Production; Catering; Craft and Design; Hair, Beauty and Aesthetics; Legal Services; Media, Broadcast and Production. Vocational Courses (e.g. C&G, IMI & NVQ) are available across a range of subjects, including: Accountancy; Beauty Therapy; Bricklaying; Catering; Electrical Installation; Gas; Hairdressing; Joinery; Media Make-Up; Motor Vehicle; Plumbing (& many more).

How are T Levels graded?

On passing a T Level a nationally recognised certificate will be provided showing the overall grade achieved as either Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction*, with the same grading used for each occupational specialism, and a separate grade for the core component using A*-E. It will also include confirmation that the student has met the minimum requirements for Maths and English qualifications, completed the industry placement and met any additional mandatory requirements. It will also give details of what was learnt on the course to help progress into skilled employment or a higher apprenticeship.

T Levels will also be worth UCAS points. Distinction* is worth the same as 3 A Levels at A* and will be recognised by universities and other education providers so that further study can continue in higher education/university. A student's overall T Level grade will be worked out from the grades they achieved on the core component and the occupational specialisms. Students who do not pass all elements of their T Level will get a T Level statement of achievement which will show the elements they have completed.

APPRENTICESHIPS (& Traineeships and Supported Internships)

Sources:

<https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/>

<https://www.gov.uk/become-apprentice>

What is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship gives you hands-on experience, a salary and the opportunity to gain qualifications while you work.

How do apprenticeships work?

To get your career started you usually need a combination of experience and qualifications. An apprenticeship gives you both by combining on the job training with study (usually one day a week) meaning you can earn while you learn. With some apprenticeships you can even get a degree.

It usually takes between one and six years to complete an apprenticeship depending on which level you take. Apprenticeships are available across a wide range of job roles and industries, and many high quality, prestigious companies offer them.

If you have no work experience on your CV, or you'd like to get a taster of a particular job or industry, you might like to consider work experience first.

What levels of apprenticeships are there?

Apprenticeships come in different levels, from Intermediate (Level 2) right through to Degree apprenticeships at Level 7 (equivalent to postgraduate study).

Advanced apprenticeships (aged 16+) at Level 3 (equivalent to 2 A levels) often requires 5x4 including English Language and Maths at GCSE as a minimum.

Higher apprenticeships (aged 18+) at Level 4+ (equivalent to Foundation degree and above) often requires A Levels/T Levels/BTEC/equivalent qualifications.

You can check the apprenticeship standards on offer on the Institute for Apprenticeships website: <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprentices/> ('Apprenticeship Search').

How much can you earn?

The minimum wage for apprentices aged 16-18 is £4.81 per hour (from 1st April 2022). The same applies if you're 19 and over and in the first year of your apprenticeship, after that you are entitled to the National Minimum Wage. However many employers pay more than this.

Pay is dependent on the industry, location and type of apprenticeship. Some higher apprenticeships can pay as much as £500 per week. The Apprenticeship Pay Survey 2018/19 estimated that Level 2 & 3 apprentices in the UK received £6.96 gross pay an hour.

What do employers look for?

Punctuality, reliability and having a real interest in the job, coupled with a willingness to learn. Many employers also value any voluntary work experience, especially if it relates to that particular role or sector.

Where can I search for vacancies?

There are many websites and apprenticeship training providers that advertise opportunities including: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>

Information on Traineeships & Supported Internships (as possible alternative options)

Visit: <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/explore-your-education-and-training-choices>

Examples of Local 6th Forms, Colleges & Apprenticeship Providers

Trafford

- Altrincham College: www.altrinchamcollege.com
- Altrincham Grammar School for Boys: www.agsb.co.uk
- Altrincham Grammar School for Girls: www.aggs.trafford.sch.uk
- Ashton on Mersey School: www.aomsixthform.co.uk
- Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic College: www.bthcc.org.uk
- Flixton Girls School: www.flixtongirls.com
- Loreto Grammar School: www.loretogrammar.co.uk
- Sale Grammar School: www.salegrammar.co.uk
- St Ambrose College: www.st-ambrosecollege.org.uk
- Stretford Grammar: www.stretfordgrammar.com
- Trafford College (Altrincham & Stretford): www.trafford.ac.uk
- Urmston Grammar School: www.urmstongrammar.org.uk
- Wellington School: www.wellington-school.co.uk

Salford

- Salford City College (City Skills, Eccles Sixth Form College, FutureSkills@MediaCityUK, Pendleton Sixth Form College, Worsley College): www.salfordcc.ac.uk
- UTC@MediaCityUK: www.utcmidiacityuk.org.uk

Manchester

- Access Creative College: www.accesscreative.ac.uk
- Connell Co-op College: www.connell.ac.uk
- Loreto College: www.loreto.ac.uk
- The Manchester College (Shena Simon, Nicholls, Northenden, Wythenshawe, Fielden, Harpurhey, Openshaw, The School of Building): www.tmc.ac.uk
- Xaverian College: www.xaverian.ac.uk

Cheshire

- Reaseheath College: www.reaseheath.ac.uk
- Sir John Deane's Sixth Form College: www.sjd.ac.uk
- Stockport College: www.stockport.ac.uk
- The Cheadle College: <https://cheadle.cmcnet.ac.uk/>

Apprenticeship Providers

- Estio: <https://www.estio.co.uk/>
- Salford City College: <https://www.salfordcc.ac.uk/apprenticeships-salford-city-college/>
- Stegta: <https://www.stegta.co.uk/>
- The Growth Company: <https://www.gceducationandskills.ac.uk/apprenticeships/>
- Total People: <https://www.totalpeople.co.uk/>
- Trafford College: <https://trafford.ac.uk/apprenticeships/apprenticeships>

WHAT NEXT IN YEAR 11?

- Presentation by Amy on Post-16 Options in September.
- Group Work session with Amy on career planning websites for careers research in September (open day information will also be provided for all local 6th forms and colleges).
- One to one career guidance interviews with Amy in the Careers Room (back of the LRC) from September to December.
- Career guidance reviews if necessary during December and the Spring Term (all students considering an apprenticeship at 16 and all students predicted on or below the UGS entry requirements will be offered a review and support with completing application forms elsewhere if necessary).
- Lunch time drop in sessions with Amy still available every Wednesday.

USEFUL WEBSITES FOR CAREER PLANNING

GMACS & Xello: <https://gmacs.co.uk/> – ‘Career Plan’ tab, Xello

eClips (Password: UGSM41): <http://www.eclips-online.co.uk/>
(Leave a space in middle of password)

Apprenticeships: <https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/>

Higher Ideas (Access Code: 26n9pv2h): <http://www.careersoft.co.uk/> – ‘Sign in’ link

UCAS (Higher Education): <https://www.ucas.com/>

Informed Choices: <https://www.informedchoices.ac.uk/>
(A Level choices for degrees at competitive Russell Group Universities)

(Year 11 Group Work held in September will focus on exploring some of these websites in detail).

On the UGS network Student SharePoint Careers Folder you can find additional resources, including information on Post-16 Options.

On the UGS website (About Us, Careers) you can find additional resources and websites:
[Urmston Grammar School - Useful Careers Resources & Websites](#)

AMY MARSHALL (CAREERS ADVISER) AT URMSTON GRAMMAR

From Sept 2022: Available in school on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Lunch time drop in every Wednesday in the Careers Room.

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