



**MAKE**  
—  
**HAPPEN**

**MAKE**  
**YOUR FUTURE**  
**HAPPEN.**

# Our Partner Universities



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# Preparing for your Careers Fair



Understand what a careers fair is and its purpose

## | My journey

- Choose your own path
- Follow your interests
- Expect surprises

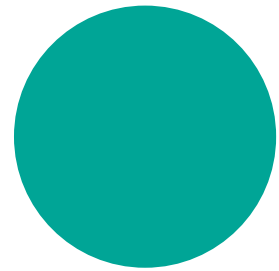


# Your journey

- You have a good idea of what you want to do after Year 11?
- You have some idea?
- You have no idea at all?



1 minute



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# What is a Careers Fair?

# What is a careers fair?

Chance to meet people who might shape your future

- Explore a range of possible options
- Make useful contacts
- Plan for your future



# Who will be at the careers fair?

## CAREERS SUPPORT

Make Happen  
Careers advisors

## CHARITIES

Young Minds

## TRAINING PROVIDERS

Nova Training  
Kleek Academy

## EMPLOYERS

Border Force  
HSBC  
Greater Anglia

## SIXTH FORMS AND COLLEGES

Sigma Sixth Colchester  
Colchester Sixth Form  
Colchester Institute

## UNIVERSITIES OR COLLEGES OFFERING DEGREE COURSES

University Centre Colchester  
Anglia Ruskin University  
University of Essex

# Who will be at the careers fair?



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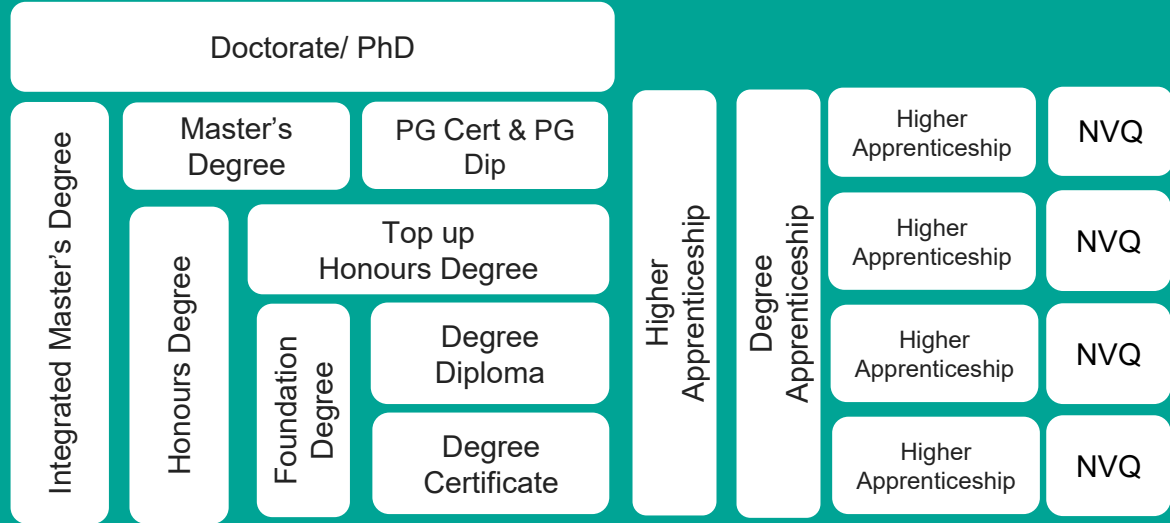
# Brain break

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**What is the right  
option for me?**

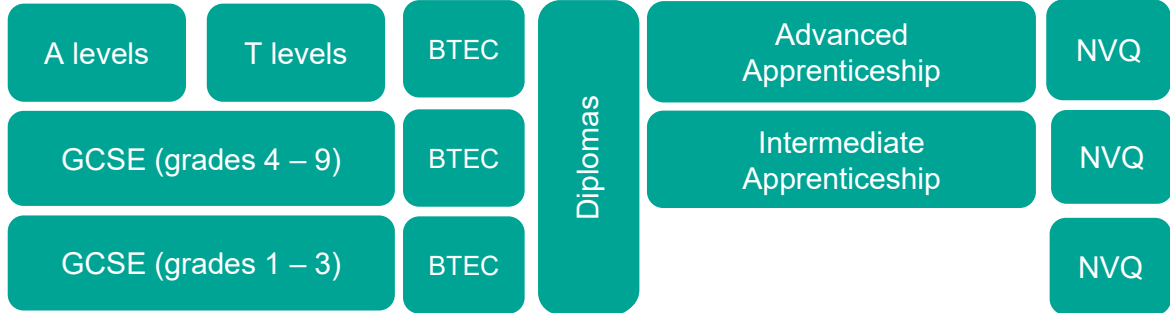
# Higher Education

- Level 8
- Level 7
- Level 6
- Level 5
- Level 4



# Secondary/ Further Education

- Level 3
- Level 2
- Level 1



## Glossary

**BTEC:** Business and Technology Innovation Council

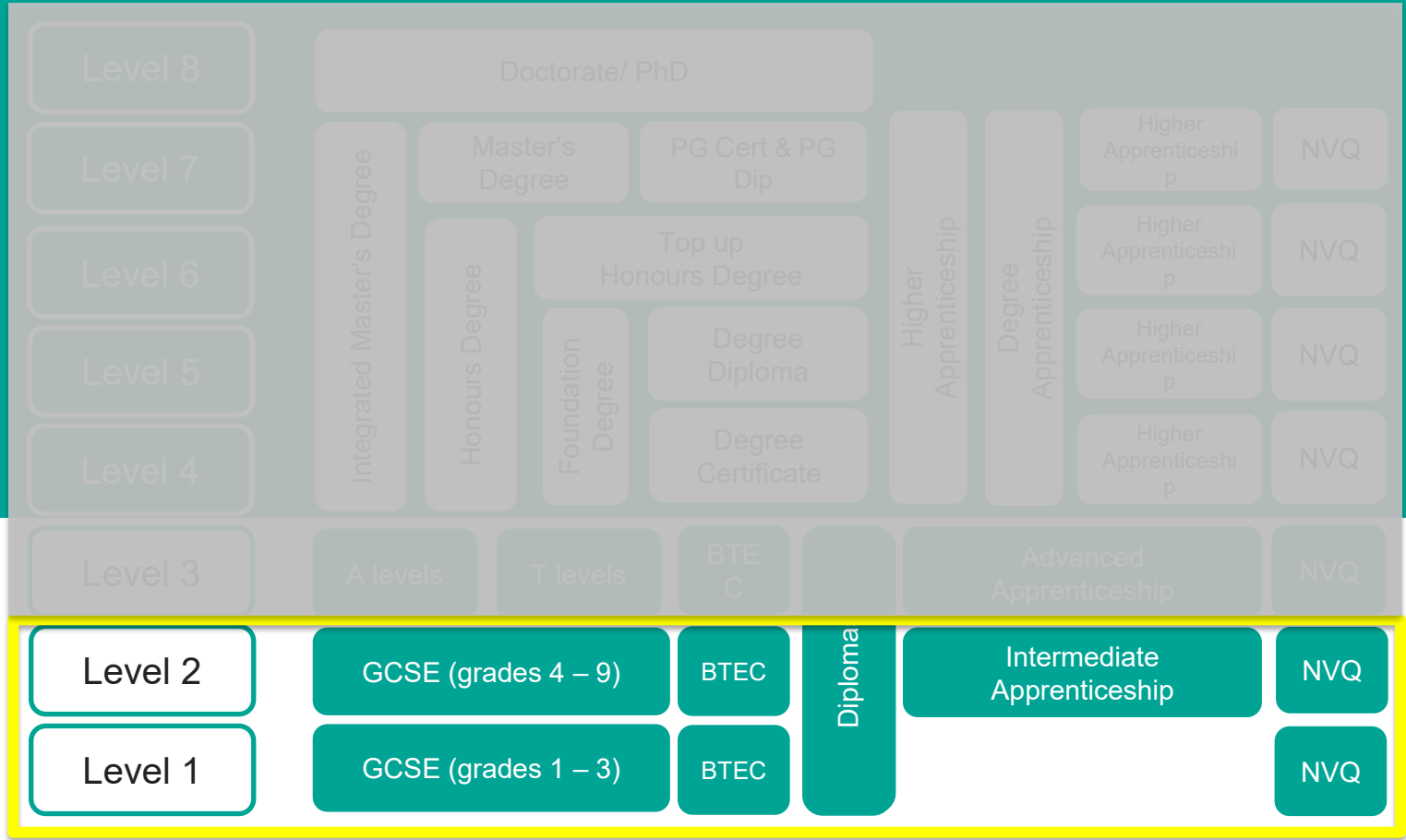
**NVQ:** National Vocational Qualification

**PG Cert:** Postgraduate Certificate

**PG Dip:** Postgraduate Diploma

# Higher Education

# Secondary/ Further Education



**Glossary**

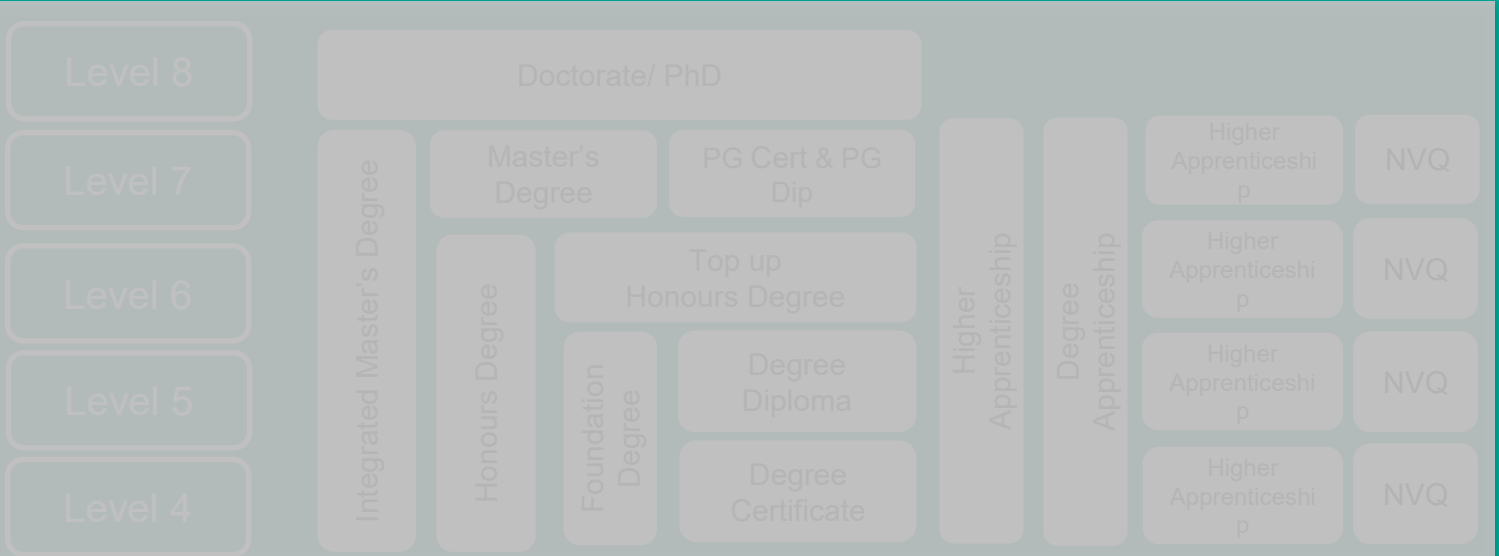
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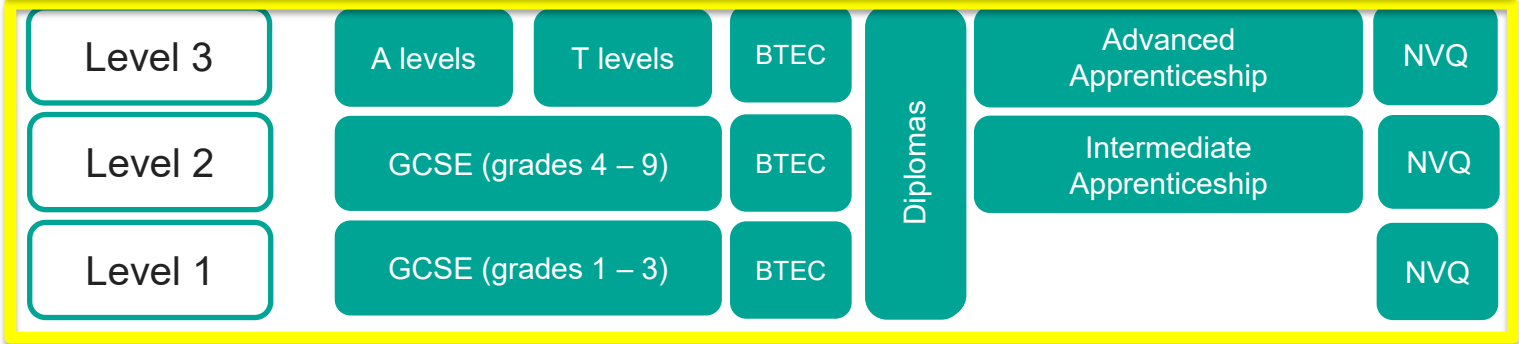
**PG Cert:** Postgraduate Certificate

**PG Dip:** Postgraduate Diploma

# Higher Education



# Secondary/ Further Education



**Glossary**

**BTEC:** Business and Technology Innovation Council

**NVQ:** National Vocational Qualification

**PG Cert:** Postgraduate Certificate

**PG Dip:** Postgraduate Diploma

## Which route?

**A Levels**

**Level 3 BTECs**

(or other vocational qualifications)

**A Levels**

**T Levels**

**Apprenticeships**

- Theoretical classroom-based learning.
- Usually study 3 subjects
- At sixth form or college

# Examples of A level courses

- 3D Design and Architecture
- Accounting
- Business
- Computing
- Drama & Theatre Studies
- Economics
- Engineering
- Film Studies
- Fine Art
- Graphic Design
- Law
- Photography
- Politics
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Statistics
- Textiles



Colchester Royal Grammar School



## Which route?

**A Levels**

**Level 3 BTECs**

(or other vocational qualifications)

**Level 3 BTECs**

(or other vocational qualifications)

**T Levels**

**Apprenticeships**

- Usually more practical work-related subjects
- Coursework or project work.
- Equivalent of 1-3 A levels depending on type.

## Examples of vocational courses (BTECs, City and Guilds etc)

- Animal Care
- Animation
- Art and Design
- Business
- Electric/Hybrid Vehicle Routine Maintenance
- Fashion Business and Retail
- Forensics and Criminal Investigation
- Games Development
- Health and Social Care
- Illustration and Graphic Design
- Performing Arts
- Policing
- Sport and Exercise Science
- Visual Design and Architecture



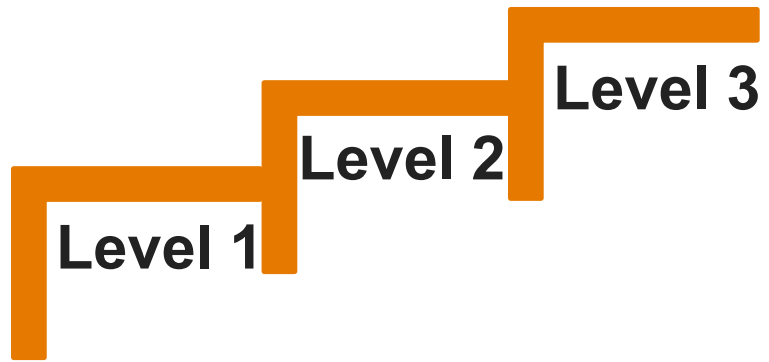
# A Levels vs. BTECS (or other vocational qualifications)

A Levels	BTEC
Academic qualification	Vocational qualification
More traditional subjects – Maths, History, Psychology, Biology	Variety of courses ranging from computing, forensic science, engineering, hair and beauty, childcare, business etc.
2 years to complete	1-2 years to complete
Choose 3 or 4 A Levels	Choose 1 BTEC*
Mix of coursework and exam (80% exam, 20% C/W)	Mainly coursework but may have some exams

\*Some 6<sup>th</sup> form/colleges allow you to do a mixture of both A Levels and BTEC's

# Comparing levels of qualification

- You need to look carefully at the level of qualification you are applying for.
- This will affect the entry requirements and how long they will take to complete.



# Comparing levels of qualification

Level 1

## Sport and Active Leisure **Level 1** Diploma

Duration	Age Group	Study	Start	Available Locations
<b>1 YEAR</b>	<b>SCHOOL LEAVERS</b>	<b>FULL TIME</b>	<b>01/09/2026</b>	<b>Southend Campus</b>

- Overview
- Entry Requirements
- Course Structure
- Assessment & Feedback
- Course Cost
- What Next...

### Overview

An ideal course if you want to gain knowledge of the fundamental aspects of sport in preparation for further study.

Application Process

### Entry Requirements

- An Entry 3 qualification or GCSEs x 2 at grade 2/E in MATHS or ENGLISH
- Successful attendance at transition event



# Comparing levels of qualification

Level 2

## Sport BTEC **Level 2** First Extended Certificate

Duration	Age Group	Study	Start	Available Locations
<b>1 YEAR</b>	<b>SCHOOL LEAVERS</b>	<b>FULL TIME</b>	<b>01/09/2026</b>	<b>Southend Campus</b>

- Overview
- Entry Requirements
- Course Structure
- Assessment & Feedback
- Course Cost
- What Next...

### Overview

A busy and practical sport course to support progression onto the level 3 sports coaching or sports science course. There is practical sessions weekly with sports coaching a priority. This suits learners who learn practically and are ready to work hard to achieve on and off the field. The course runs the same as level 2 Football academy.

Application Process

### Entry Requirements

Level 1 qualification or GCSEs x 2 at grade 3/D in MATHS or ENGLISH



# Comparing levels of qualification

Level 3

## Sport and Exercise Sciences **Level 3** Extended Diploma

Duration

**2 YEARS**

Age Group

**SCHOOL LEAVERS**

Study

**FULL TIME**

Start

**01/09/2026**

Available Locations

**Southend Campus**

Overview

Entry Requirements

Course Structure

Assessment & Feedback

Course Cost

What Next...

Success Stories...

### Overview

This course will prepare you for a career in the sport industry or as a stepping stone to a Higher Education course at University. The Extended Diploma is equivalent to three A Levels.

Application Process

### Entry Requirements

- You will need a minimum of 4 GCSEs at grade 4-9, including maths, English, science and physical education

or

- [Sport and Active Leisure Level 2 Diploma](#) and grades 4-9 in maths and English



# Which route?

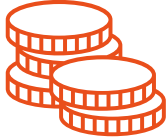
**A Levels**

**Level 3 BTECs**  
(or other vocational qualifications)  
**Apprenticeships**

**T Levels**

**Apprenticeships**

- Earn whilst you learn
- 80% on the job training
  - 20% studying.



Apprenticeships are a great way to earn money whilst you study.



They are real jobs, with a contract of employment working alongside experienced staff, gain job specific skills, holiday leave and on-the-job training.

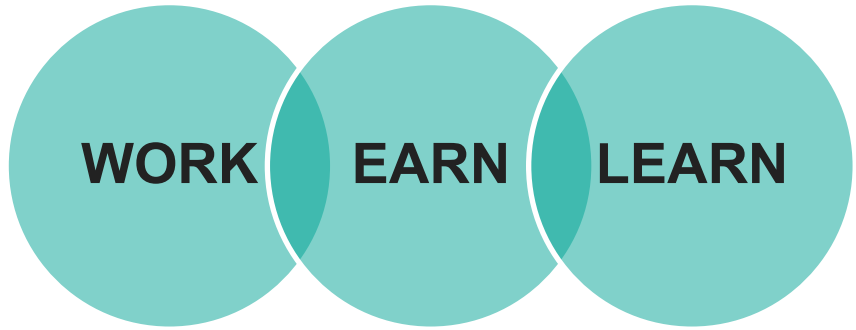


On-the-job training makes up about 80% of apprentice working hours.



The other 20% of working hours is spent formally studying for a qualification, for example in a classroom, online or at your place of work.

# Different Levels – same approach



## HIGHER Apprenticeship

Higher apprenticeships go from level 4 to 7 and are equivalent to a foundation degree and above.

## DEGREE Apprenticeship

Degree apprenticeships are available at levels 6 and 7 and are equivalent to a full bachelor's degree and Master's.

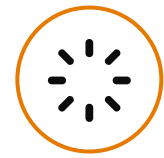
# What apprenticeships are available?



Accounting



Aviation



Horticulture



Architect



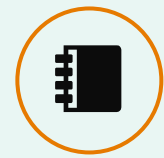
Creative & Digital



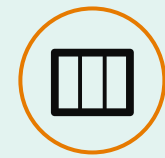
Teaching



Cyber Security



Surveying



Project management



Nursing



Dental Nursing



Hospitality



Hairdressing



Legal Services



Journalism

...and many more

# What is the minimum wage per hour for an apprentice?

£3.90

£4.81

£7.55

£10.20



**What percentage of apprentices  
stay in employment after their  
apprenticeship?**

90%

60%

80%

70%



# Let's hear from a local apprentice!



## Which route?

**A Levels**

**Level 3 BTECs**

(or other vocational qualifications)

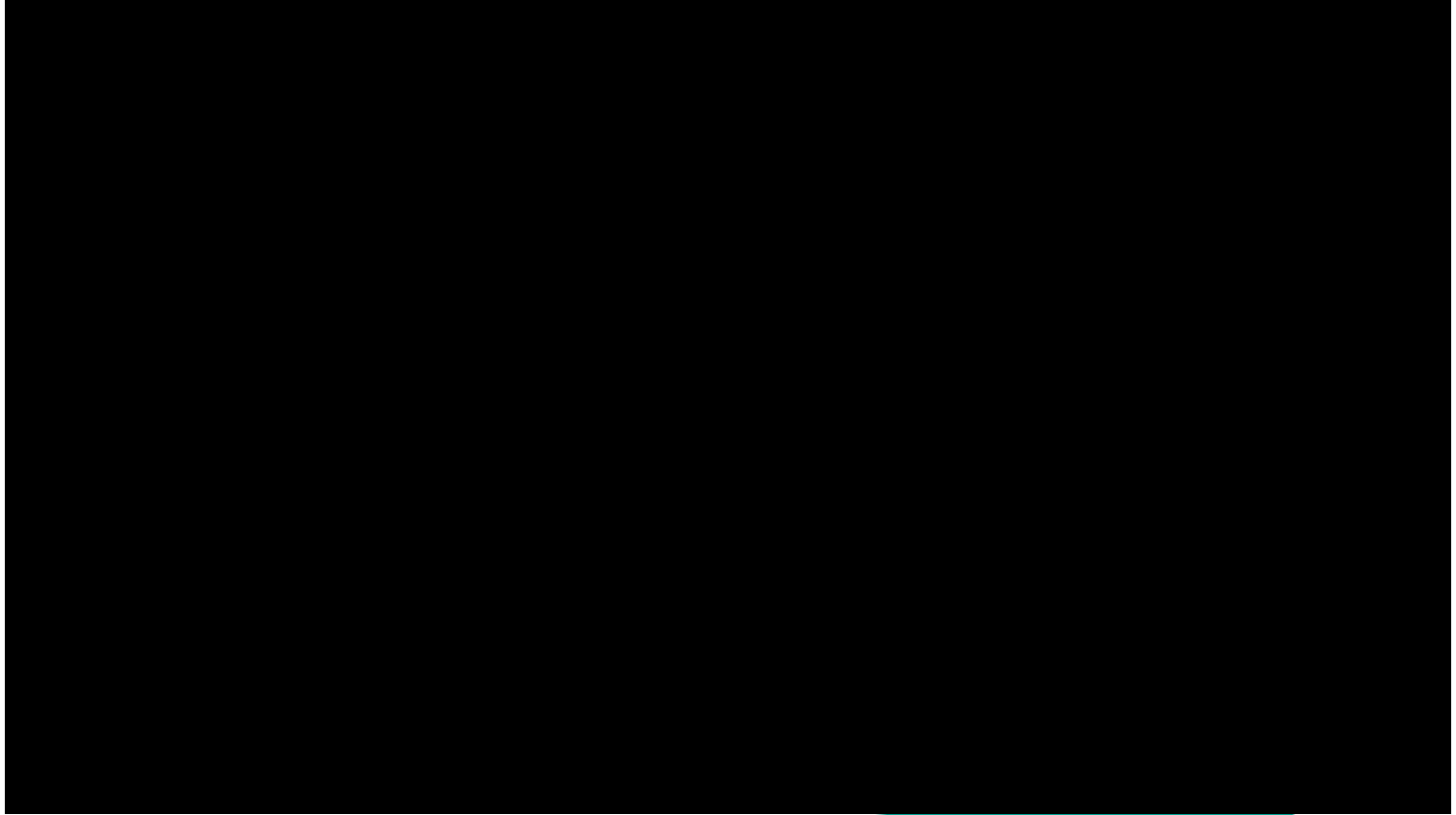
**T Levels**

**T Levels**

**Apprenticeships**

- The equivalent of 3 A levels.
- 80% in the classroom
  - 20% on a 45-day industry placement.

## Let's hear from a local T Level student!



## T Level subjects

- Agriculture, environmental and animal care
- Business and Administration
- Catering (start date TBC)
- Construction
- Craft and Design
- Digital
- Engineering and Manufacturing
- Education and Early years
- Hairdressing, Barbering and Beauty Therapy
- Health and Science
- Legal, Finance and Accounting
- Media, Broadcast and Production



## Recap

### A Levels

- Theoretical classroom-based learning.
- Usually study 3 subjects at sixth form or college

### Level 3 BTECs

(or other vocational qualifications)

- Usually more practical work-related subjects with coursework or project work.
- Equivalent of 1-3 A levels depending on type.

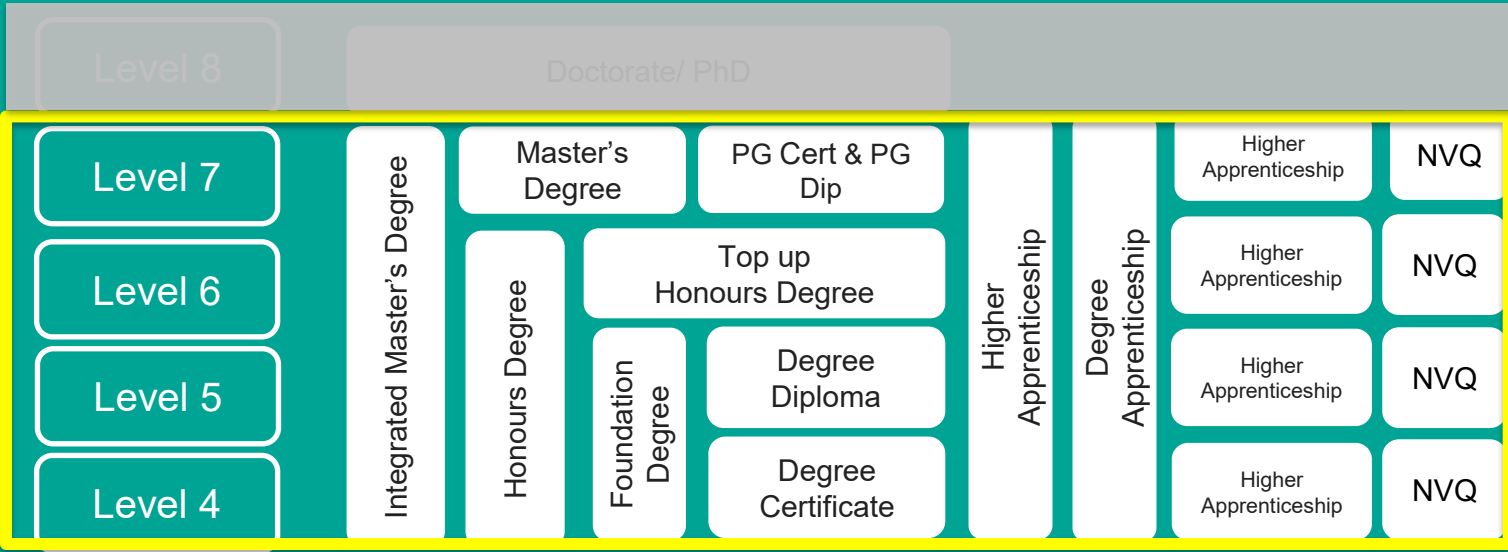
### T Levels

- The equivalent of 3 A levels.
- 80% in the classroom, 20% on a 45-day industry placement.

### Apprenticeships

- Earn whilst you learn.
- 80% on the job training, 20% studying.

# Higher Education



# Secondary/ Further Education



**Glossary**

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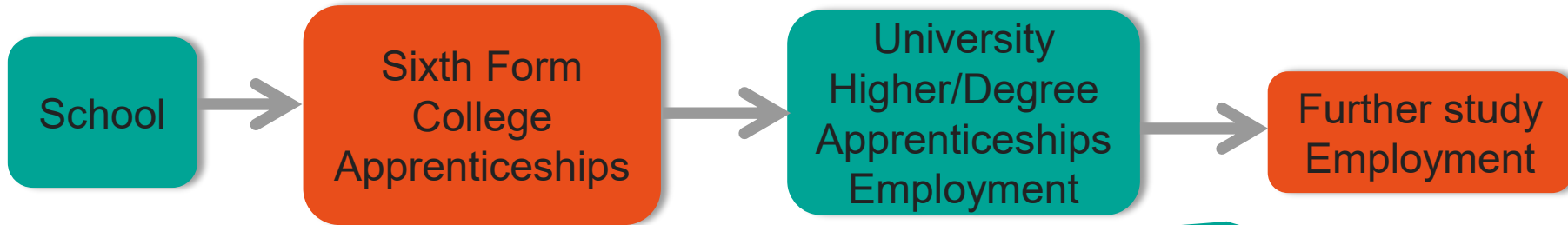
**NVQ:** National Vocational Qualification

**PG Cert:** Postgraduate Certificate

**PG Dip:** Postgraduate Diploma

# | What is university?

- A place where you study towards a higher-level qualification - this is why it is called **Higher Education**.
- Usually....
  - Apply during sixth form or college when you are 17 or 18
  - 3 or 4 years
  - Leads to a degree



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# Planning your path



**I know what career  
I want to do**



**Work backwards**

**I know which  
subjects or areas I  
want to study next**



**Work forwards**

# I want to pursue a career in...healthcare

Higher Education

- Level 8
- Level 7
- Level 6
- Level 5
- Level 4

Degree in medicine, nursing, paramedic science etc

Healthcare Assistant Higher National Diploma

Apprenticeships in various healthcare roles

Secondary/  
Further Education

- Level 3
- Level 2
- Level 1

A levels in science subjects

BTEC in Health & Social care

T Level in Health

Strong passes in GCSEs in English, Maths and Triple Science.

What work experience do I need?

# I want to study something to do with...**criminology, forensics or law**

Higher  
Education

- Level 8
- Level 7
- Level 6
- Level 5
- Level 4

Degree in criminology, forensics, law, psychology or a combination

Apprenticeships in law (solicitor), policing or the prison service

Secondary/  
Further Education

- Level 3
- Level 2
- Level 1

A levels in Biology, Law, Psychology

BTEC in Forensics and Criminal Investigation

T Level in Legal Services

Strong passes in GCSEs in English, Maths and Science, as well as other essay writing subjects

What work experience do I need?

## Your own education or career timeline

### Your career goal

I want to be...

I would like a career that...

### Higher Education

I could study the following degrees or do a higher or degree apprenticeship in:

### Skills and experience

Relevant work/volunteering experience and the skills you'd need to show:

### Further Education

I could study the following qualification/s at college/sixth form or as an apprenticeship:

I would need the following grades:

### Year 11

I would need to achieve the following GCSE grades (include any specific subjects required here too):

## Software developer

### How to become

Explore the different ways to get into this role.

### What it takes

Find out what skills you'll use

### What you'll do

Discover the day to day tasks:

### Career path and progress

Look at progression in this role

### Current opportunities

Find apprenticeships, courses

Programme

Software developer tasks, run server

Average salary

£ £30,000  
Starter

+

## How to become

Explore the different ways to get into this role.

You can get into this job through:

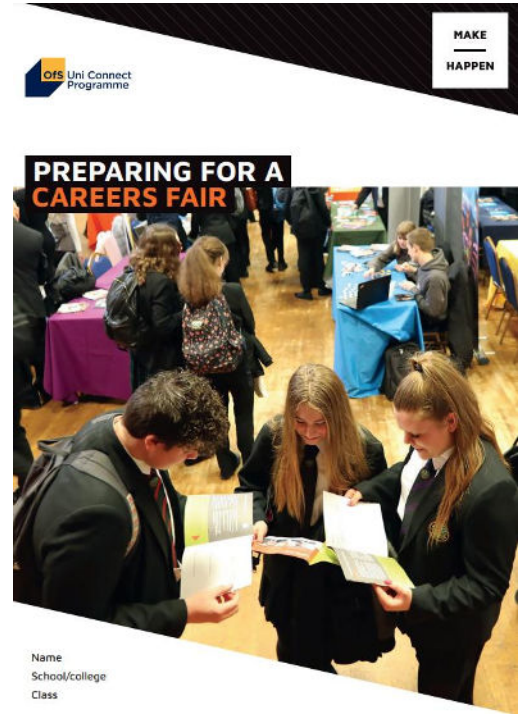
- a university course
- a college course
- an apprenticeship
- a graduate training scheme



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# What to do at the careers fair?

# Preparing for a Careers Fair booklet



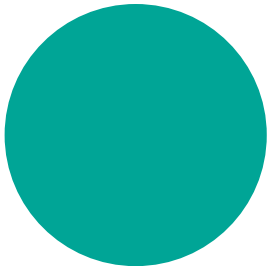
[makehappen.org/guide/preparing-for-a-careers-fair-interactive-guide-book/](https://makehappen.org/guide/preparing-for-a-careers-fair-interactive-guide-book/)

# Questions to ask

Come up with **3 questions** that you will ask the different types of exhibitors.

This will help you to start conversations

1 minute



Q1.

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WHO TO ASK:

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Q2.

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WHO TO ASK:

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Q3.

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WHO TO ASK:

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## EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

### TO EMPLOYERS AND TRAINING PROVIDERS

- What are the skills your employees need?
- What does a typical day look like?
- What qualifications do I need?
- Do you run apprenticeships?
- What is the average salary?
- What work experience would help my application?

### TO COLLEGES, SIXTH FORMS, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

- What subjects do you offer?
- What qualifications would I get and which level is this?
- What qualifications do I need?
- What work experience do I need?
- What are your entry grades?
- What careers support is on offer?

# THE FUTURE

**The next few months will go quickly.  
Start thinking now about your future.**

**Make one step today**

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**[WWW.MAKEHAPPEN.ORG](http://WWW.MAKEHAPPEN.ORG)**

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# Part 2 – Final preparations for your Careers Fair

# Your strategy for the careers fair

## MAKE IT HAPPEN!

Use this as a chance to find out what you need to make it happen! What course will you need to do? Can you do an apprenticeship for this career or will you need to go to university? What experience will you need? Which qualities are employers looking for?

## DISCOVER OPPORTUNITIES!

Find out about the kind of roles available in this industry sector and what qualifications you will need. Which job roles appeal to you the most? What skills and qualities are important for that job role? How can you build on your interest in this area?

## FOLLOW YOUR INTERESTS!

Find out where you can continue studying your favourite subject/s and what grades you need. What related subjects could you study? Ask universities and employers which careers this subject could lead you to. Are there any apprenticeship roles that are connected to your favourite subject?

## EXPLORE!

Keep an open mind and talk to as many employers as possible. Find out which job roles are on offer and what appeals to you. What does their typical work week look like? Which skills and qualifications would you need? Ask about work experience opportunities so that you can gain more of an insight into that career area before you commit.

## Example questions

### To employers and training providers:

- What are the skills your employees need?
- What does a typical day look like?
- What qualifications do I need?
- Do you run apprenticeships?
- What is the average salary?
- What work experience would help my application?
- Do you offer work experience?
- What is the application process like?
- What's the best part of your job?

### To colleges, sixth forms and universities:

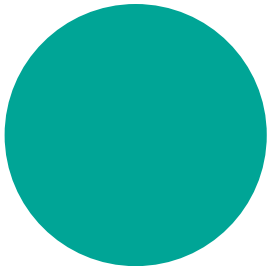
- What subjects do you offer?
- What qualifications would I get and which level is this?
- What qualifications do I need?
- What work experience do I need?
- What are your entry grades?
- What careers support is on offer?
- What other types of support are on offer?

# Questions to ask

Come up with **3 questions** that you will ask the different types of exhibitors.

This will help you to start conversations

1 minute



Q1.

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WHO TO ASK:

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Q2.

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WHO TO ASK:

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Q3.

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WHO TO ASK:

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## EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

- TO EMPLOYERS AND TRAINING PROVIDERS**
- What are the skills your employees need?
  - What does a typical day look like?
  - What qualifications do I need?
  - Do you run apprenticeships?
  - What is the average salary?
  - What work experience would help my application?

- TO COLLEGES, SIXTH FORMS, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**
- What subjects do you offer?
  - What qualifications would I get and which level is this?
  - What qualifications do I need?
  - What work experience do I need?
  - What are your entry grades?
  - What careers support is on offer?

# Making notes

- Contact details and names
- Courses and key details
- Future opportunities
- Things to go away and research further

**DURING THE EVENT**

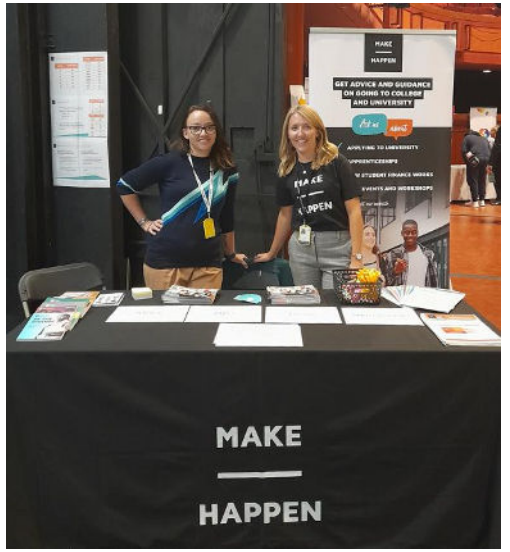
**NOTES  
FROM THE DAY**

USE THIS SPACE TO MAKE NOTES FROM THE DAY – THINGS YOU FOUND OUT, NEW CAREERS OR COURSES YOU DISCOVERED AND THINGS YOU WANT TO RESEARCH FURTHER.



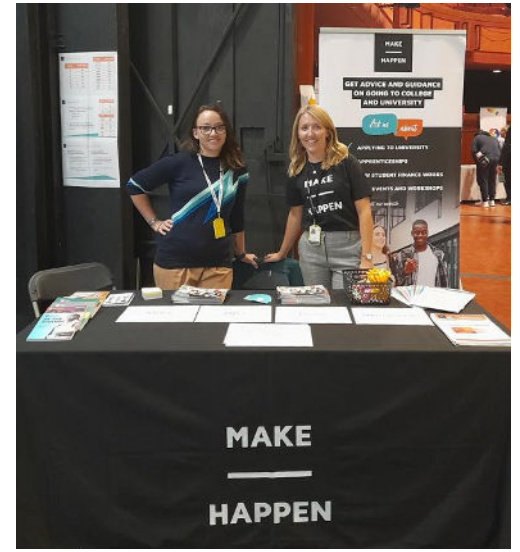
# Top tips

- Remember your planned questions
- Prioritise who you want to speak to most
- Everyone is there because they are interested in meeting and helping you.



# Top tips

- Think about how you present yourself
  - (Smile, introduce yourself and make eye contact)
- Be brave! Your future will be different to your friends so go to the stands you are genuinely interested in.
- Keep an open mind. You might not find the exact career you're interested in but use it as an opportunity to explore what's available.



# After the careers fair

## THREE THINGS I'M GOING TO DO

Putting together an action plan to continue exploring your options will help you to achieve your future goals. Write down 3 targets below. You can use the prompts below to help you or write your own.

1

TO FIND OUT MORE  
ABOUT MY NEXT STEPS  
I'M GOING TO...

Attend the  
Writtle open  
evening on  
14<sup>th</sup> Oct to  
find out about  
their sports  
courses and  
facilities.

2

TO INVESTIGATE  
MY CAREER OPTIONS  
I'M GOING TO...

Use UCAS to  
find out what  
subjects and  
grades I need  
at college to  
get onto a  
physiotherapy  
degree course.

3

TO FIND OUT ABOUT  
WORK EXPERIENCE  
OPPORTUNITIES  
I'M GOING TO...

Follow up with  
Matt at  
ProSports on  
helping with  
their sports  
clubs for work  
experience,



# YOUR CAREERS FAIR

**Make sure that you get  
the most out of this opportunity**

**Focus on your own priorities**

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