



Some questions to ask yourself about post-16 options

Staying in the sixth form at school

- Are you happy at school? Do you think it is the best place for you to learn in?
- Does your sixth form offer the courses you want to do? Check on university or job entry requirements before you decide to compromise.
- What are the entry requirements, e.g. GCSE grades, for the courses you want to do? Is achieving these realistic for you?

Going to a college of further education

- Will you be happy with the college environment, which may be very different to school? Have you been to a college open day to get a feel for the environment you would be learning in?
- Which colleges offer the courses you are interested in?
- How will your progress be assessed, e.g. through taking exams, doing course work, observation by a tutor, or a mix of some or all of these? Which of these methods suit you as a person?
- What opportunities are there to move on to another course afterwards, especially if your first course will only last one year?
- Will you have to travel further? Is there transport you can use? Have you checked whether you can get help with travel costs?

Doing an Apprenticeship

- Do you think earning while you are learning would work well for you?
- Is there a particular vocational area you know you want to focus on and you are sure you will stay interested in?
- In the current climate are you able to find an employer who will take you on or get someone to help you with this, e.g. through the National Apprenticeship Service? Have you got the persistence you will need to find that job?
- Are you able to hold down a job in the real workplace, working alongside people who will be mostly older than you? Can you get up in time and keep the company rules? Remember if you lose your job, your apprenticeship can't continue.
- Have you got the literacy and numeracy skills to complete the technical and portfolio work you will need to do? It isn't just about doing a practical job.
- Have you got the commitment to get through the full apprenticeship term (2 – 3 years typically)? If you give up half-way through, you lose your funding and will find it hard to start a different apprenticeship.
- Are you interested in getting into higher education, but won't a more practical route than A levels, maybe even with the possibility of being sponsored through university?