## For career information and inspiration:

Yes2Jobs **www.yes2jobs.co.uk**
Careers support and listing of employment opportunities for young people in Gloucestershire.

Plotr **www.plotr.co.uk**
Careers advice website including career videos, quizzes and advice.

National Apprenticeship site **www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship**
For detailed information and vacancy searching.

National Careers Service **https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk**
For everyone over the age of 13.

South West Apprenticeship Company **www.theswac.org.uk**
For a local flavour of apprenticeships, including vacancy searching.

UCAS **www.ucas.com**
Is the starting point for all research about higher education.

UCAS Progress **www.ucasprogress.com**
Lists hundreds of courses in Gloucestershire.

On Your Mind **www.onyourmindglos.nhs.uk**
For advice and support on mental health and wellbeing.

traveline **www.traveline.info**
Plan your journey when considering your post-16 options.

Gloucestershire Youth Suppport Team **www.youthsupportteam.co.uk**
For additional support.

Care to learn **www.gov.uk/care-to-learn**
If you're a young parent you can get help with childcare costs.

Young Gloucestershire **www.youngglos.org.uk**
Can support young people who are facing challenge in their lives.

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If you require a plain formatted version, please contact:
communications@gloucestershire.gov.uk

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# What's Next?

**Your essential guide to
Choosing education and career options
2017 – 2018**

There is _more than_ one route to success

_This is an exciting time in your life_
**Think about what you enjoy and make the right choice**

**yes** jobs   **grOw** Gloucestershire   **Gloucestershire** COUNTY COUNCIL

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## Let's get started...

Are you finding it tricky deciding what you want to do when you leave school, and how to make it happen?
**That's OK!** There are a range of options available to you. This booklet will talk you through them.

**Turn the page for a guide to this document and your future.**

# What's Next?

# What's Next?

## So, you're doing your GCSEs...

**What can I do with less than 5 GCSEs A* – C?**

**What can I do with 5 or more GCSEs A* – C?**

**What can I do with A*– C?**
More info on p9

**Traineeship**
More info on p17

**BTEC level 2 = (GCSEs)**
More info on p12

**NVQs Level 1-5**
More info on p12

**Level 2 Apprenticeships**
More info on p15

**Apprenticeships Intermediate –Level 2 Advanced Level 3**
More info on p15

**BTEC Level 3 (equivalent to A-Levels)**
More info on p12

**A-Levels**
More info on p13

**If you have additional needs or need support to get into work**
More info on p17

## Looking ahead
### What are your options after you're 18?

**Gap Year**
Travel
Work (in UK or abroad)
Volunteer (UK or abroad)
Retake exams
Test a sector out
More info on p25

**Earn and learn Higher Apprenticeships**
Level 4/5 HNC
Foundation Degree
Level 6 – Degree
More info on p23

**Degree / Foundation Degree**
Choosing course
Moving away
Staying at home
Open University
More info on p22

**Employment**
More info on page 26

## Notepad

As you work through this booklet, use this space to make notes about *What's Next* for you.

| Sixth Form / College | Open Days / Evenings |
|---|---|
| Hartpury College | Saturday 16 Sept 2017 - 9am - 2pm<br>Saturday 7 Oct 2017 - 9am - 2pm<br>Saturday 4 Nov 2017 - 9am - 2pm<br>A-Level & Diploma Courses |
| The High School for Girls | Please see school website for details |
| Katherine Lady Berkeley's | Wednesday 15 Nov 2017- Please check time with school |
| Marling School | Thursday 9 Nov 2017 - 5pm - 8pm |
| Newent | Thursday 8 Feb 2018 - 6pm - 8pm |
| Pates Grammar | Tuesday 23 Jan 2018 - Please check time with school |
| Rednock | Thursday 16 Nov 2017 - 5.30pm - 8.30pm |
| Ribston Hall | Please see school website for details |
| Sir Thomas Rich's | Please see school website for details |
| South Gloucestershire & Stroud College Stroud/Filton | Saturday 30 Sept 2017 -10am - 1pm (All campuses)<br>Wednesday 11 Oct 2017 - 5.30pm - 8pm<br>(A Levels at SGS Filton only)<br>Saturday 4 Nov 2017 - 10am - 1pm (All campuses)<br>Saturday 25 Nov 2017 - 10am - 1pm (All campuses)<br>Saturday 20 Jan 2018 - 10am - 1pm (All campuses)<br>Wednesday 21 Mar 2018 - 5.30pm - 8pm<br>(All campuses)<br>Saturday 9 June 2018 - 10am - 1pm (All campuses) |
| St Peter's High School | Please check with the school |
| Tewkesbury | Please see school website for details |
| Wyedean | Thursday 30 Nov 2017 - 6pm - 8pm |

**Please note**, these dates may change so it's best to check directly with the school or college.

# Endless possibilities

**Hello,**

It's time to think about your future, what subjects and qualifications you might need and **What's Next** for you after GCSEs. Whether you're in year 9 or 13, the next few years depends on your decisions about your future.

When I was 16 I was studying for my GCSEs at St Peter's in Gloucester. It then took me a while to figure out that local politics was what I wanted to do for a job. So I know this can be an overwhelming time, which is why we've created this booklet.

Firstly, don't panic when trying to decide what you want to do! Use this booklet as a starting point on your journey. Talking to friends, teachers or even people in the area of work you are interested in will help you choose. It's important that you know about all the choices out there and you take the path that is right for you.

I hope you will find this booklet helpful in your quest to figure out: **What's Next?**

**Best of luck!**



**Councillor Mark Hawthorne**
Leader of Gloucestershire County Council

# Making choices

## Here are some things you need to know, do and think about...

**What you need to know:**
- The law says you must stay in learning until the age of 18. This does not mean you have to stay in school. Learning also includes college, training, or full time work as long as it includes some part time learning e.g. an apprenticeship.
- You pick GCSEs options in Year 8 or 9, depending on your school.
- You usually pick your next step in Year 11.

**What you need to do:**
- Ask as many questions as you need before you make your decisions – there's no such thing as a stupid question!
- Talk to a range of people; your parents, your teachers and other young people who are a bit older than you. This will help you get a variety of advice.
- Talk to staff at your school – many schools can set up meetings with a qualified careers adviser.
- Research all of your options and write down the pros and cons for each.
- Try to get work experience in an area you're interested in – try it out first.
- Attend open evenings/days to get a feel for sixth forms, colleges and universities.

**What you need to think about:**
- What are you good at? (Quiz on page 5)
- What do you enjoy?
- What might you want to do until you are 18? (info on pages 11-17)
- What might you want to do after you're 18? (info on pages 21-25)
- What jobs are available in your local area? (info on page 29)
- What resources at school could help you with these decisions? Ask your teachers or the school librarian to help you.

There are lots of resources available for young people at: **www.yes2jobs.co.uk** including quizzes, work experience and job opportunities.

There is lots of support, information and job opportunitites at: **www.yes2jobs.co.uk**

# QUIZ

# Building on your Strengths

**Read each statement below, and if you agree with it, put a tick in the coloured box to the right of it.**

## Do you like to…

- Do puzzles?
- Fix or mend things?
- Express your own style?
- Work in a team?
- Organise things like school work?
- Set goals for yourself?
- Build things?
- Read or write stories?
- Have clear instructions to follow?
- Persuade or influence others?
- Do experiments or research things?
- Help others to learn?
- Help people solve personal problems?
- Take care of animals?
- Have your day structured?
- Sell things or promote ideas?
- Do creative writing?
- Work on science projects?
- Take on new responsibilities?
- Help people?
- Figure out how things work?

- Care for younger children?
- Explore creative ideas?
- Play a sport?
- Keep detailed records?
- Make sure things get done?
- Take photographs?
- Be physically active?
- Work with your hands?
- Sing, dance or act?
- Think of ideas for events or activities?
- Solve mechanical problems?
- Talk to a range of people at a party?
- Find the best deals on the internet?
- Help your friends out?
- Use the computer to type up work?
- Do astronomy? (star gazing)
- Work out a budget for pocket money?
- Keep up with the latest fashions?
- Work out a solution to a problem?
- Be creative?
- Pay attention to detail?

- Type up homework/keep it neat?
- Learn about other cultures?
- Analyse, research or problem solve?
- Play an instrument or sing?
- Dream of starting your own business?
- Cook?
- Act in plays?
- Do practical things?
- Work with numbers or charts?
- Be kind and cooperative?
- Keep your work in ordered folders?
- Take charge (be a leader)?
- Work outdoors?
- Work in an office?
- Work on Maths problems?
- Care for others?
- Draw or paint?
- Give a speech or presentation?

- Convince people to do it your way?
- Suggest a better way to do a task?
- Use a microscope?
- Fix electrical or electronic things?
- Lead a group?
- Design fashions, interiors, architecture?
- Keep on going till you finish?
- Research to find things out?
- Perform experiments?
- Understand complicated ideas?
- Do voluntary work?
- Fix your bicycle?
- Teach others?
- Get all your school work done on time?
- Enjoy music?
- Make sure that everyone gets along?
- Be your class representative?
- Be reliable and on time?

**Total up the number of ticks for each colour** and record the number in the coloured boxes.

**Read what they mean on the next page.**

| REALISTIC | INVESTIGATIVE | ARTISTIC | SOCIAL | ENTERPRISING | CONVENTIONAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
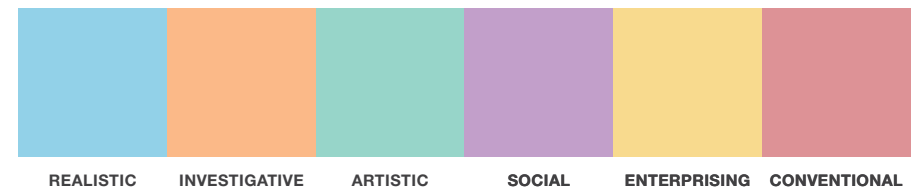
**The areas you scored highest are probably your strengths.**
You might want to consider building on these in your career.

**Investigative**
The Thinkers

**Artistic**
The Creators

**Realistic**
The Do-ers

**Social**
The Helpers

**Conventional**
The Organisers

**Enterprising**
The Persuaders
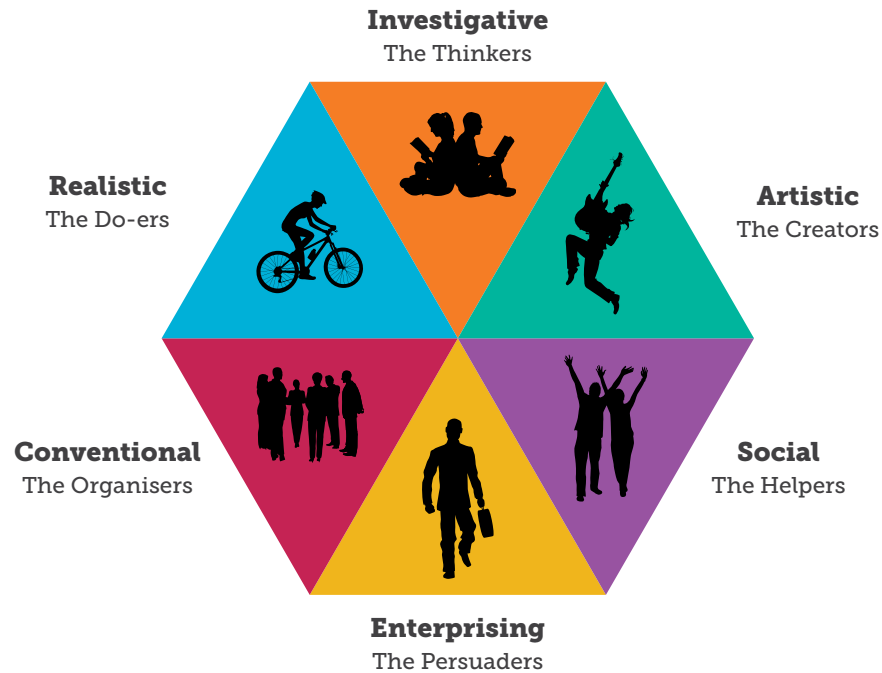
| **Investigative** | **Artistic** | **Social** |
|---|---|---|
| People who like to observe, learn, investigate, analyse, evaluate or solve problems. They often like to work independently, tend to be good at Maths and Science and enjoy analysing data. | People whose abilities are artistic, innovative or intuitive. They like to work in unstructured situations where they can use their imagination and creativity. They enjoy performing (theatre or music) and visual arts. | People who like to work with people to enlighten, inform, help, train, or cure them, or are skilled with words. They enjoy training, instructing, counselling or curing others. They are often good public speakers with helpful, empathetic personalities. |

| **Enterprising** | **Conventional** | **Realistic** |
|---|---|---|
| People who like to work with people, influencing, persuading, performing, or managing for organisational goals or economic gain. They like to lead and tend to be assertive and enthusiastic. | People who like detail and data, and are good at following instructions. They are organised, good with numbers and like structured working. | People who have athletic or mechanical ability, prefer to work with objects, machines, tools, plants or animals, or to be outdoors. They like to work with their hands. They are often practical and good at solving problems. |

**John L. Holland** was the person who developed the theory that people can be described by a combination of six personality types and that people seek out work opportunities that match their personality type. A better match means more job satisfaction because the person finds the job interesting.

# What now?

## It can be a stressful time choosing options and taking exams. Lots of people have gone through it and this is their experience:

*The most enjoyable part of my course is meeting new people.* Hairdressing

*I enjoy the practical sessions and theory parts of my course, because they expand my knowledge.* Catering

*I know that I need to continue to improve and learn further.* Sixth former

*Sixth form was not for me.* Early years

*I love learning new skills.* Catering

*I eventually want to own my own business and I enjoyed business studies in school.* Hairdressing

**Some tips for dealing with stress are on page 33.**

# GCSEs

**GCSEs are your first chance to choose which subjects you want to learn. You may need to pick certain subjects if you have a particular job in mind. Or you may want to carry on with the subjects you really enjoy.**

Everyone studies English, Maths and Science. You will need a grade 4 (equivalent of the old grade C) in English and Maths to get a place on most courses after GCSEs, like A-Levels.

Your school will tell you which subjects you can choose. Subjects might include: Art, Design & Technology, Geography, Drama, History and Music.

**Top tip** - If you are not sure what to study after turning 16 or what job you want, keep your options open and try to study a variety of subjects.

## GCSEs are changing

**The grades used for GCSEs have been changing since September 2016.** New GCSEs are now graded 9 - 1, rather than A* – G. English Language, English Literature and Maths are the first subjects to use the new system, with your other subjects using numbers by 2019. Eventually all GCSEs taken in England will be marked with grades 9 - 1.

This should give you an idea of how the new grades compare to the old ones:

| Old A*-G system | New number grades |
|---|---|
| A* | 9 |
| A* | 8 |
| A | 7 |
| B | 6 |
| B | 5 |
| C | 4 |
| D | 3 |
| E | 2 |
| F | 1 |
| G | U |
| U | U |

If you are achieving a grade C now you will be achieving a grade 4 or higher. Grade 9 is the highest and is above the current A*.

# What alternatives are available to prepare for a job?

New opportunities are opening up for young people to prepare for the world of work.

These involve moving at the end of Year 9 (or Year 11) to a University Technical College (UTC) or Studio School. UTCs and Studio Schools are designed for 14-19 year olds of all abilities to study subjects linked to specific industrial sectors like STEM ( Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths).

They will closely involve universities and employers and are designed to be like the workplace. For example they follow a "9 to 5" day and don't have the same terms as schools. They will offer a range of academic and vocational qualifications including GCSEs in English, Maths and Science.

It is also possible to offer work placements linked directly to employment opportunities in the local area. Employers will also contribute to the learning experience of students throughout their programmes of study.

The first UTC is operating in Berkeley, Gloucestershire and is a partnership between employers, Stroud & South Gloucestershire College and the University of Gloucestershire to develop opportunities in Engineering, Manufacturing and Digital Technologies.

**For further information visit:**
**www.berkeleygreenutc.org.uk/about**, **www.studioschoolstrust.org** or **www.utcolleges.org**

## Are there other alternatives to school?

South Gloucestershire & Stroud College offers a 14-16 course combining GCSEs with practical and technical education.

**Further details can be found on page 36.**

# What's next?

Once you've finished your GCSEs you will have more decisions to make. Here's how some other students in the county are making decisions...

*My course leader is my go-to person for advice… they are a great guide and support me in finding new roles and experiences.* Systems support

*I chose Gloucestershire College because the facilities were appealing and they had a lot to offer.* Software development

*UCAS talks help me decide what I want to do next.* Travel and Tourism

*My tutor and family help me decide my next steps.* Hairdressing

*Myself, my employer and my lecturer help me decide my next steps.* Catering

*When making a decision it's important for me to think whether I'll enjoy it.* Health and Social Care

## BTECs

BTECs are specialist work-related qualifications that can help you get started in your chosen career. They combine practical learning with subject-specific and theory content. You can study a Level 2 programme which is broadly equivalent to 5 GCSEs at levels 4 and higher. Progression to Level 3 is the usual pathway.

Level 3 qualifications are available as the Diploma (equal to two A-Levels) or the Extended Diploma (equivalent to three A-Levels).

It may be possible to combine an A-Level with a Diploma but this is unlikely with an Extended Diploma.

You will need a GCSE grade 4 or higher in English and Maths before you can progress to either level.

These courses will not prepare you for a specific role like an apprenticeship but will provide an insight to an industry and a vocational alternative to A-Levels. They will include some work experience. Colleges have the widest range of choices and have good links to local employers.

### BTECs are great because…
They give you the broad knowledge and skills required to work in a range of jobs within an industry.

## NVQs

NVQs are competence-based qualifications. They give you the specific skills to do a particular job. They focus on the skills you will need in the workplace and assessment is usually by practical tasks and assignments. They are usually studied part-time alongside work and can be taken as a stand-alone qualification, or as part of an apprenticeship.

### NVQs are great because…
- You can test out whether you like a job and get ready for working life.
- Any experience is good experience – even if you change your mind after your course. They will still be good skills for you to put on your CV for the future.

**Did you know?**
At Gloucestershire College, more people went to university after studying BTECs than A-Levels. BTEC programmes include Hospitality, Construction, Music Technology, Sport, Business, Mechanical Engineering, Uniformed Public Services and more.

## AS and A-Levels

AS and A-Levels are the 'traditional' qualification offered by schools and colleges for students aged 16-19.

Most pupils take four AS subjects in Year 12. After AS you usually drop one subject and continue the other three subjects through Year 13.

You are mainly assessed by sitting exams, but there are other types of assessment like course work. AS and A-Levels will be assessed at the end of the course. AS assessments will usually take place after one year's study and A-Levels after two. The courses will no longer be divided into modules and there will be no exams in January. AS and A-Levels have been "decoupled" – this means that AS results will no longer count towards an A-Level, in the way they have done in the past.

Note: Some schools and colleges are moving away from offering AS levels as they are now standalone qualifications which don't contribute towards an A level.

**Thinking about A-Levels? You should know…**
- A-Levels are a lot more work than GCSEs – be prepared!
- Most schools and colleges require As* or Bs* in the subjects you want to study
- You'll need GCSE English and Maths at grade C* or above, whether or not you study them at A-Level (you can retake them at most schools and colleges if you need to).

**A-Levels are great because…**
- They are really well recognised by employers and universities.
- You can continue subjects you enjoy and are good at, often in a school setting.

*GCSE grading is changing from September 2017 – more info can be found on page 9.

**Top Tip** – When you are thinking about post 16 study, you need to think about how you will get there. The council no longer provides automatic subsidised support for mainstream learners aged 16+.
http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/applyforabuspass

# Not sure what to study?

Choose subjects you are good at and you enjoy. Studying a broad range of subjects including 'facilitating subjects' will help you keep your options open. Facilitating subjects are Sciences, English Literature, Geography, French, German and Maths.

If you have a career or university course in mind, check the entry requirements because you may need specific subjects and grades at A-Level. There is an informed choices guide to what A-Levels you need for certain subjects at:
www.russellgroup.ac.uk/for-students

**Not sure where to study?**
You don't have to carry on studying at your current school:

- Make the choice that's right for you
- Don't just follow your friends and choose what they choose
- Don't put off going somewhere your friends aren't going – you will make new friends.

**Top Tip** – Go to open days at schools and colleges you like the sound of – you can ask the teachers and current students questions about what it is like to help you decide. There is a list to start you off at the end of this booklet.

# What's next?

## International Baccalaureate

An International Baccalaureate involves studying six subjects, including languages. It's an internationally recognised qualification.

However, it isn't offered within any Gloucestershire state schools, so you would have to travel to Bristol, Bath or Swindon to study.

**See www.ibo.org for more information.**

## Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are about working for an employer and earning as you learn. You get hands-on training in the workplace. You study part time for an NVQ, BTEC or both, with training at a local college or specialist training provider. At a higher level you can also study for a degree whilst doing an apprenticeship.

**There are two types of apprenticeship that you can apply for at 16, depending on your GCSE grades:**

**Intermediate** = Level 2 (equivalent to 5 x GCSEs)
**Advanced** = Level 3 (equivalent to 2 x A-Levels)

Some students start as an intermediate level apprentice but gradually progress to advanced or even higher level as they work. This can give you an edge over school or university leavers later because you have more work experience.

**You can also do an apprenticeship after A-Levels, or if you feel you need extra training for your job role later on.**
**More info is on page 23.**

**Take a look at:** www.apprenticeships.org.uk for information and advice; **www.careersbox.co.uk** for videos of apprentices talking about their experience; **www.yes2jobs.co.uk** to search for local opportunities.

## Apprenticeships are great because....

- You earn while you learn
- 85% of apprentices stay in employment once their training ends
- 67% of apprentices stay with the same employer
- apprenticeships are available in over 170 industries including aerospace, fashion, broadcast media and finance – with 1500 job roles available

You have to be 16 or over and not in full-time education to start an apprenticeship but you can register and start to search for opportunities on the National Apprenticeship Vacancy Matching Service (NAVMS) at www.apprenticeships.org.uk as early as the spring term of Year 11.

Employers like you to have GCSEs when you apply for apprenticeships, but if they go wrong don't panic. You can often study for Level 2 Functional Skills in English, Maths and IT.

Alternatively, you can also study an apprenticeship after BTECs or A-Levels, entering as a higher level apprentice, and going on to obtain a degree.

# What's next?

## Traineeship

A traineeship is a tailor-made programme of support for young people, aged 16-24, who want to work, but who need extra help to gain an apprenticeship or a job. This combines a structured, meaningful and substantial work experience placement with training in an area of your choice, to get you ready for a job or apprenticeship. It also gives you a chance to get your Maths and English skills up to a good standard as well as developing the employment skills you need to progress with your career. Traineeships are unpaid, though employers can contribute to food and travel costs.

For more information and to find a traineeship, visit: **www.gov.uk/find-traineeship**

**There are additional options for students with special educational needs/disabilities**

Do you need extra support getting into training, work or education?
- Get in contact with Forwards career service for advice about getting a job or work experience – go to **www. forwardsgloucestershire.co.uk** to find out more.
- Speak to your education link adviser
- Find a college which supports students with additional needs.
- Complete a Transformation Plan to help you plan where you want to get to.

## Downton PLC
## Case study

*Connor Parsons*

"I left sixth form with good grades and a promising future, but I knew I didn't want to go to university.

I always had a vision to be a HGV driver, so I applied to Downton's straight after finishing my A-levels and became their youngest apprentice.

It's true that you make your own opportunities; I contacted Downton personally and found out about the apprenticeship and applied - I would encourage others to do the same!

What I love most about driving is that I get to see and learn about different places around the UK.

I chose Downton because they are constantly evolving and growing bigger so it's always very exciting with new things going on.

The career opportunities available are unlimited, and I hope to progress through the ranks and try out other areas of the business. My foundation knowledge of driving will help me to succeed wherever I go.

My advice to others considering the apprenticeship is to make sure that it's for you and be willing to commit yourself to the role.

It can be both physically and mentally demanding at times with lots to learn, but it's worth it for the end result."

> **I chose Downton because they are constantly evolving and growing bigger so it's always very exciting with new things going on.**

# Planning ahead

This calendar shows you key dates to look out for over the year!

**Key Academic Dates**

| | SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER | NOVEMBER | DECEMBER | JANUARY | FEBRUARY | MARCH | APRIL | MAY | JUNE | JULY | AUGUST | SEPTEMBER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **ALL** | Talk to your friends, parents, carers and teachers. Ask questions about your options so you know what grades you need to aim for. | | | | | | National Apprenticeship Week! Every year in March. | If you're in Year 11 and above you can also think about work experience all year round. | | | | | |
| **Year 13** | You can apply for apprenticeships all year round. | | | | | | | Lots of apprenticeships vacancies, usually April – September. | | | | | |
| | Attend University Open Days. Apply for university – write personal statement – *see www.ucas.com* Oxbridge applications close mid October. | | | Deadline for most university courses applications mid Jan. | University offers come in and you may need to attend interviews. | | | A2 Exams | | IB Results Day 1st Monday in July. BTEC Results Mid July. | | A2 Results Day! 3rd Thursday in August. University clearing process for some. | |
| **Year 12** | Attend university open days and research what grades you need for different options. | | | | | | | AS Exams & start A2 studying. | | BTEC Results! Mid July. | AS Results day! Third Thursday in August. | | |
| **Year 11** | Register and search for apprenticeships on the National Apprenticeship Vacancy Matching Service (NAVMS) at *www.apprenticeships.org.uk*. | | | | | | | Can start an apprenticeship from 4th Friday in June. | | | GCSE Results Day! 4th Thursday in August. You may need to talk to your college or sixth form about your grades. | | |
| | School, college and sixth form open days – talk to individual schools for dates. | | | Apply for College. Find out the deadline from individual colleges. | | | | GCSE Exams | | BTEC Results! Mid July. | | | |
| **Year 10** | Ask questions about your options so you know what grades you need to aim for. | | | | | | | GCSE Exams | | Most schools offer work experience in July. | GCSE Results Day! 4th Thursday in August. | | |
| **Year 9** | Think about GCSE options or talk to your school about alternatives to GCSE. | | | Pick your GCSE options. Your school will tell you the exact deadline. | | | | | | | | | |

# Looking Ahead

## There are more choices to make when you're 18. What are other people in the county doing?

*University is the next step to help progress my knowledge and get into the industry I'm interested in.* Systems support

*I felt working was the next best step for me to take.* Systems support

*I am struggling with what to do after sixth form. I want to go to university but I'm thinking... three years of study... I would rather work.* Sixth former

*I am indecisive about what to do after A-Levels, whether to go to work, go to university or do an apprenticeship.* Sixth former

*I'm starting a foundation degree in September.* Early years

*I hope to find a job when I finish studying.* Catering

*I'm possibly doing a Level 3 BTEC or changing course so I can go to university.* Catering

## University

### Why choose university?
- It's good if you have a specific career in mind (like being a doctor) but also if you don't have a career in mind, as it helps to keep your options open.
- University can be a good step towards living away from home, giving you independence and confidence.
- You get lots of opportunities to meet new people, learn from professionals and travel.

If you want to go to university you need to think carefully about what you want to do, and the qualifications you need to get there. Check out some university open days – they will tell you what A-Level subjects and grades you need.

### Thinking about university?
To get into a university you need to:
- Head to the UCAS website to start your application
- Write a personal statement about you and what makes you a good candidate
- Attend an interview
- Consider visiting the university at an open day before applying
- Apply to student finance for your loan.

You could always consider **Open University** – you do your own study, in your own home, at your own pace.

**Further info:** There is a huge choice of courses you can take – check them out at www.ucas.com. If you want to know more about student finance and applications visit www.gov.uk/student-finance

Graduates in some jobs can expect to make more money than non graduates over a lifetime. Choose your course carefully though, as recent research says this only works for some degrees. You can expect to pay £36,000 or more for tuition and maintenance which are covered by loans that you have to pay back as you work. Some students can apply for grants if they are eligible for certain benefits, disabled or need help with childcare costs.

# Advanced & Higher Level Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is a minimum of a year of working and earning while you study. Normally, you work four days a week and you study at college one day a week. Apprenticeships come at different levels of difficulty and are equivalent to different qualifications:

| Name | Level | Equivalent educational level |
|------|-------|------------------------------|
| Intermediate | 2 | 5 GCSE passes at grades A* to C* |
| Advanced | 3 | 2 A-Level passes |
| Higher | 4,5,6 and 7 | Foundation degree and above |
| Degree | 6 and 7 | Bachelors or Masters degree |

You can progress over several years from Level 2 to Level 4 and beyond, and most of the time your employer will fund your apprenticeship so you don't have to worry about tuition fees.

### Benefits of doing an apprenticeship

- Earning a salary
- Training in the skills employers want
- Excellent progression opportunities, whether looking to study further or climb the ranks within the workplace
- Increased future earning potential
- Learning at a pace suited to you
- Only in a classroom one day a week!
- Gain practical, hands-on experience.

* GCSE grading is changing from September 2017 – more info on page 9.

**Top Tip** – Go to open days at schools and colleges you like the sound of – you can ask the teachers and current students questions about what it is like to help you decide.

## Alice Ciereszko
### Interior Design student and Ambassador for Children and Young People

Alice Ciereszko

Since I was about eight or nine I wanted to be an interior designer. I orientated my GCSE's and sixth form choices around art and design. I went on to pass my foundation diploma in art and design at college and I am now at university studying what I have always wanted to do.

I have faced many challenges over the last four or so years. I entered supported housing at eighteen and had to look for a job and a permanent place to live whilst being in full time education.

I found a role at the council as an Ambassador for Children and Young People and I have achieved so much over the last four years. I feel like I have contributed to making a real difference to young people and their families, and I find that motivating and rewarding.

My advice would be to believe in yourself and don't be afraid to step into the unknown and try new things. It took a lot of hard work, sweat and tears to get to where I am today. I have had a number of amazing people in my support networks to help me early on and whilst at university.

To be perfectly honest, at first I wasn't even sure if I wanted to go to university. I rejected my first offer and took a gap year to get some extra head space to decide. If you need support from someone - ask for it. Don't be afraid to make decisions. Don't be afraid that you'll make mistakes either - they may be the best things you've ever done!

> **Don't be afraid to make decisions. Don't be afraid that you'll make mistakes either - they may be the best things you've ever done!**

# Gap Years

## Gap years can give you the opportunity to:

- Travel and see the world
- Get a taste of independence
- Volunteer and get some work experience
- Work to fund future studies
- Study for additional qualifications such as an Art & Design Foundation Diploma
- Gain experience in your chosen career

If you choose to do some travelling you might want to go by yourself, with a friend or with a gap year organisation/charity.

The Year Out Group website www.yearoutgroup.org has information to help you decide if a gap year is right for you.

# Getting ready for work

You may feel ready to start full-time work when you are 18, or you may want to work part time while you study. There are some things to think about to improve your chances of getting a job:

**Develop your employability skills**
Improve time-keeping, using your initiative and working in a team.
*For more info on what employers are looking for go to page 32.*

**Get some work experience**
Get a part-time or holiday job, either by volunteering or through your school or college.

**Put together a CV**
Any work experience or volunteering looks good.
*Go to page 31 for more information.*

# Work experience

Work experience is a great way to test out whether you like a job/sector. It also shows employers that you've thought about what you want to do and have a realistic idea of what working life is like.

You'll do work experience with your school or college. You can also arrange your own experience during school holidays or at weekends.

Part-time work while you study is also a great way to get experience and learn skills – as long as your education comes first!

# Volunteering

### Why Volunteer?
- Gain skills that employers are looking for
- Develop confidence
- Find out more about what you're good at
- Feel valuable
- Get work experience for your CV
- Learn new skills and get extra qualifications
- Support a good cause
- Meet people
- Have fun!

To find local volunteering opportunities visit:
www.volunteerglos.org.uk
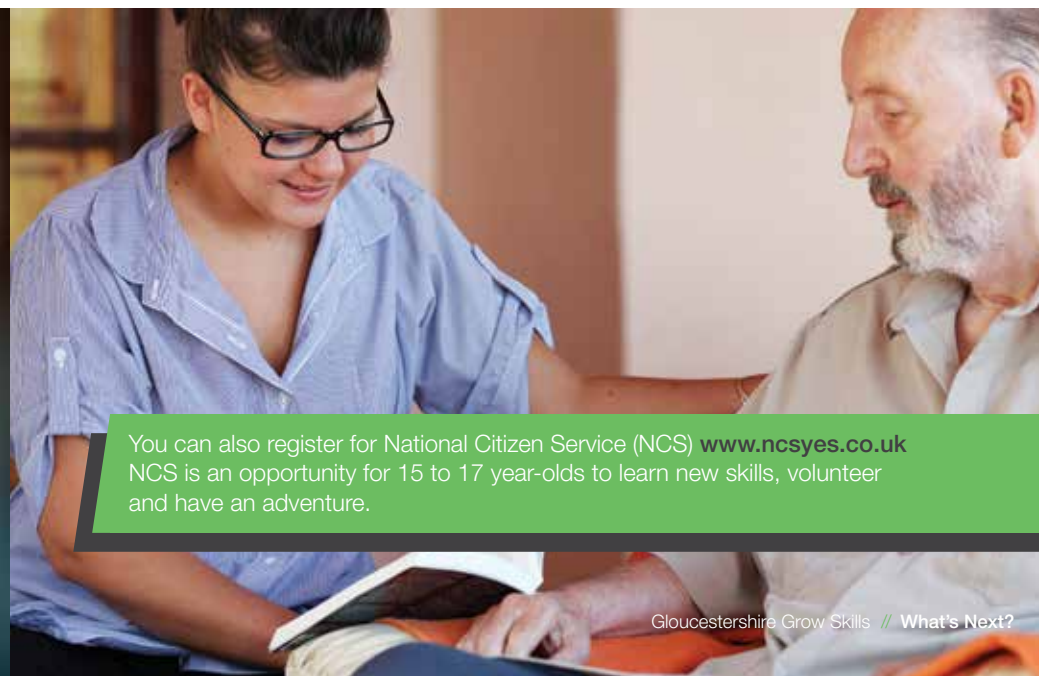
You can also register for National Citizen Service (NCS) **www.ncsyes.co.uk** NCS is an opportunity for 15 to 17 year-olds to learn new skills, volunteer and have an adventure.

## Jobs in Gloucestershire

### Gloucestershire is a great place to live and work

**Most businesses in Gloucestershire are small and employ less than five people. There are also some very large employers.**

- Public sector admin, education and health
  – the biggest sector in terms of workforce numbers.
- Distribution (including retail), hotels and restaurants
  – supermarkets are usually the largest individual employers.
- Banking, finance and insurance – major employers
  include Ageas and Endsleigh (insurance companies).
- Manufacturing and engineering – including Safran Landing Systems
  (aerospace), Renishaw (hi-tech measuring specialists) and Unilever
  (consumer products).

**You might want to take a look at Job Market Information on the National Careers Service website:**
https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk

## Downton PLC
won Outstanding Business Contribution at the 2016 GROW Awards



*Downton PLC*

There are the obvious skills which we look for in an employee or apprentice, such as commercial awareness, team working and punctuality. But whether it's learning to manoeuvre a 44-tonne lorry, navigating through an engine as a technician or managing driver loads through transport planning, the most crucial attributes a potential candidate can possess are adaptability and grit.

Any growing business understands the importance of attracting fresh young talent, even more so in the logistics industry where one of the worst skills shortages of any industry sector is underway.

Until recently, lorry driving was deemed a profession for the older male; however women and apprentices alike are working to change this misleading perception. But it's not just age that is a determining factor in employing young people, they offer fresh perspectives and enthusiasm that challenges long-term veterans in the industry who often become complacent.

The innovative nature in which they can harness technology and working practices, without the fear of challenging the status quo is what makes young people such a valuable asset to our organisation.

Having the right attitude at an interview trumps technical ability. We don't seek out the finished article, but rather those who are able to recognise the opportunities available, and the willingness to take advantage of them and succeed.

### A strong work ethic, motivation and a positive attitude are a winning formula

Our advice to you is to be patient and find out all of the facts when taking the next steps on your employment journey. While apprenticeships are by nature the lower end of the pay spectrum, this is only a temporary arrangement. Young people will do well to look towards the long-term, and consider how an apprenticeship or an entry-level position will propel them forwards.

# Writing a CV and covering letter

CVs and covering letters are a great way to show your skills and experience. They are the first impression employers get of you. They can be daunting to write at first, but these tips are a good starting point:

## CV

**CVs should be no longer than two sides of A4.**

- If there's a job description, read it
- Write three sentences about your skills and personality
- List your education and qualifications including what you are studying at the moment
- List any work experience and volunteering, and what tasks you did
- Include a bit of information about your skills, hobbies and interests
- Have a smart and professional layout
- Remember to include your contact details.

## Covering letters

**A covering letter should be no longer than one page of A4.**

- One line saying why you are writing
- A few lines about you and your skills
- A paragraph about your experience and what you would bring to the organisation or role
- A paragraph about why you want to work for this organisation and in this role
- A few sentences to summarise.

**There's more information at:**
https://www.how2become.com/resources/ultimate-guide-to-building-a-cv/ and at https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/get-a-job/cv-tips

# How to impress at interviews



## Make a good first impression

- Be on time or if you can, a bit early. It shows you are keen.
- Dress appropriately for your interview, don't worry about being too smart.
- Turn your phone off.
- Give a firm handshake.
- Take a deep breath, smile and speak calmly and clearly.
- Research the role and company – do you understand what they do and what you'll need to do?
- Be interested in your job – ask questions about what your employer expects of you.
- Keep eye contact throughout the interview.
- Ask the employer some questions at the end of the interview.

## Employers want to see that you can:

- Work well in a team
- Solve problems
- Use a computer (basic Word and Email skills)
- Turn up on time
- Motivate yourself
- Stick with tasks

*What are you like at these? Employers often say that your willingness to work (your attitude) is every bit as important as your skills and qualifications. Are you ready for work?*

You can **download the Forwards job app**, for quick tips on how to ace an interview. For more tips, do's and don'ts and questions that you might get asked, visit: https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/get-a-job/interview-advice

# Tips for dealing with stress

## Choosing options and taking exams is stressful

### Need to relax?

**These tips can help:**

- Have a bath to relax
- Do exercise – it'll burn off stress and release endorphins
- Pop bubble wrap! It'll help calm you
- Eat some dark chocolate – it releases endorphins
- Take a break and get outside for some fresh air and hopefully sunshine
- Spend time with animals – research shows they reduce stress

### Feeling really stressed out?

**These tips can help:**

- Take a break from revision
- Talk to friends and family about how you're feeling
- Talk to a range of people and teachers about your decision
- Don't be embarrassed to ask for help
- Try not to procrastinate – you'll just feel worse afterwards

### Finally:

Remember it's okay to not know what you want to do.

If you're really struggling and feel really down, **talk to your GP immediately**.



There's a new website for young people in Gloucestershire to find out about mental health and wellbeing:
**www.onyourmindglos.nhs.uk**

# Contacts

## Schools with sixth forms / sixth form centres

**All Saints' Academy**
01242 711200
www.asachelt.org

**Archway School**
01453 763242
www.archwayschool.net

**Balcarras School**
01242 515881
www.balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk

**Beaufort Co-operative Academy**
01452 301381
www.beaufort.coop

**Cheltenham Bournside School & 6th Form Centre**
01242 229542
www.bournside.gloucs.sch.uk

**Chipping Campden School**
01386 840216
www.chippingcampden.gloucs.sch.uk

**Chosen Hill School**
01452 713488
www.chosen-hill.gloucs.sch.uk

**Churchdown School Academy**
01452 713340
www.churchdown.gloucs.sch.uk

**Cleeve School**
01242 672546
www.cleeveschool.net

**The Cotswold School**
01451 820554 or 820938
www.cotswold.gloucs.sch.uk

**The Crypt School**
01452 530291
www.cryptschool.org

**Farmor's School**
01285 712302
www.farmors.gloucs.sch.uk

**Gloucester Academy**
01452 428800
www.gloucesteracademy.com

**The High School For Girls**
01452 543335
www.hsfg.org

**Katharine Lady Berkeley's School**
01453 842227
www.klbschool.org.uk

**Marling School**
01453 760156
www.marling.gloucs.sch.uk

**Newent Community School & 6th Form**
01531 820550
www.newent.gloucs.sch.uk

**Pate's Grammar School**
01242 538219 – 6th Form Office
www.patesgs.org

**Rednock School**
01453 543618
www.rednockschool.org.uk

**Ribston Hall High School**
01452 382249
www.ribstonhall.gloucs.sch.uk

**Sir Thomas Rich's School**
01452 338400
www.strschool.co.uk

**St Peter's RC High School & 6th Form**
01452 520594
www.stpetershigh.net

**Stroud High School**
01453 764441
www.stroudhigh.gloucs.sch.uk

**Tewkesbury School**
01684 292152
www.tewkesburyschool.org

**Wyedean School & 6th Form Centre**
01291 625340 / 01291 636180
www.wyedean.gloucs.sch.uk

## Colleges in Gloucestershire

**Cirencester 6th Form College**
01285 640994
www.cirencester.ac.uk

**Gloucestershire College**
0345 155 2020
www.gloscol.ac.uk

**Hartpury College**
01452 702345
www.hartpury.ac.uk

**South Gloucestershire and Stroud College**
0800 056 7253
www.sgscol.ac.uk

## Training Providers in Gloucestershire

**Bridge Training**
Gloucester 01452 411112
www.bridgetrainingltd.co.uk

**Prospect Training**
Gloucester
01452 332996 or 01452 331500
www.prospect-training.org.uk

**Military Preparation College (MPCT)**
0330 111 3939
www.mpct.co.uk/MPCT/College

## UTCs and Studio Schools (from page 10)

**SGS Berkeley Green UTC**
in Gloucestershire,
opened in September 2017
www.berkeleygreenutc.org.uk

**Bristol Technology and Engineering Academy**, in South Gloucestershire
www.bteacademy.co.uk

**UTC Swindon**
www.utcswindon.co.uk

**Digitech Studio School Bristol**
www.digitechstudioschool.co.uk

# Gloucestershire Open Evenings

| Sixth Form / College | Open Days / Evenings |
|---|---|
| All Saints | Please see school website for details |
| Archway | Thursday 16 Nov 2017 - 5.30pm-8pm |
| Balcarras | Thursday 11 Jan 2018 - Check time with school |
| Beaufort | Thursday 23 Nov 2017 - Please check time with school |
| Berkeley Green UTC | Saturday 30 Sept 2017 - 10am -1pm<br>Saturday 4 Nov 2017 - 10am -1pm<br>Saturday 25 Nov 2017 - 10am - 1pm<br>Saturday 20 Jan 2018 - 10am - 1pm<br>Wednesday 21 Mar 2018 - 5.30pm - 8pm<br>Saturday 9 Jun 2018 - 10am - 1pm |
| Bournside | Thursday 18 Jan 2018 - 5.30pm - 8pm |
| Chipping Campden | Thursday 2 Nov 2017 - Please check time with school |
| Chosen Hill | Thursday 9 Nov 2017 - Please check time with school |
| Churchdown | Please see school website for details |
| Cirencester 6th Form College | Saturday 14 Oct 2017 - 10am - 3pm<br>Thursday 18 Jan 2018 - 5pm - 8pm |
| Cleeve | Please see school website for details |
| The Cotswold | Thursday 16 Nov 2017 - 6.30pm - 8pm |
| The Crypt School | Wednesday 8 Nov 2017 - 6pm - 8pm |
| Farmors | Thursday 16 Nov 2017 - 6pm - 8pm |
| Gloucester Academy | Please see school website for details |
| Gloucestershire College | Please see school website for details |

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| The Crypt School | Wednesday 8 Nov 2017 - 6pm - 8pm |
| Farmors | Thursday 16 Nov 2017 - 6pm - 8pm |
| Gloucester Academy | Please see school website for details |
| Gloucestershire College | Please see school website for details |

| Sixth Form / College | Open Days / Evenings |
|---|---|
| Hartpury College | Saturday 16 Sept 2017 - 9am - 2pm<br>Saturday 7 Oct 2017 - 9am - 2pm<br>Saturday 4 Nov 2017 - 9am - 2pm<br>A-Level & Diploma Courses |
| The High School for Girls | Thursday 18 Jan 2018 - 5pm |
| Katherine Lady Berkeley's | Wednesday 15 Nov 2017- Please check time with school |
| Marling School | Thursday 9 Nov 2017 - 5pm - 8pm |
| Newent | Thursday 8 Feb 2018 - 6pm - 8pm |
| Pates Grammar | Tuesday 23 Jan 2018 - Please check time with school |
| Rednock | Thursday 16 Nov 2017 - 5.30pm - 8.30pm |
| Ribston Hall | Please see school website for details |
| Sir Thomas Rich's | Please see school website for details |
| South Gloucestershire & Stroud College Stroud/Filton | Saturday 30 Sept 2017 -10am - 1pm (All campuses)<br>Wednesday 11 Oct 2017 - 5.30pm - 8pm<br>(A Levels at SGS Filton only)<br>Saturday 4 Nov 2017 - 10am - 1pm (All campuses)<br>Saturday 25 Nov 2017 - 10am - 1pm (All campuses)<br>Saturday 20 Jan 2018 - 10am - 1pm (All campuses)<br>Wednesday 21 Mar 2018 - 5.30pm - 8pm<br>(All campuses)<br>Saturday 9 June 2018 - 10am - 1pm (All campuses) |
| St Peter's High School | Please check with the school |
| Stroud High School Sixth Form | Thursday 9 Nov 2017 - 5pm - 8pm |
| Tewkesbury | Thursday 16 Nov 2017 - 6.30pm - 8.30pm |
| Wyedean | Thursday 30 Nov 2017 - 6pm - 8pm |

**Please turn the page** to reveal more open evenings

**Please note**, these dates may change so it's best to check directly with the school or college.