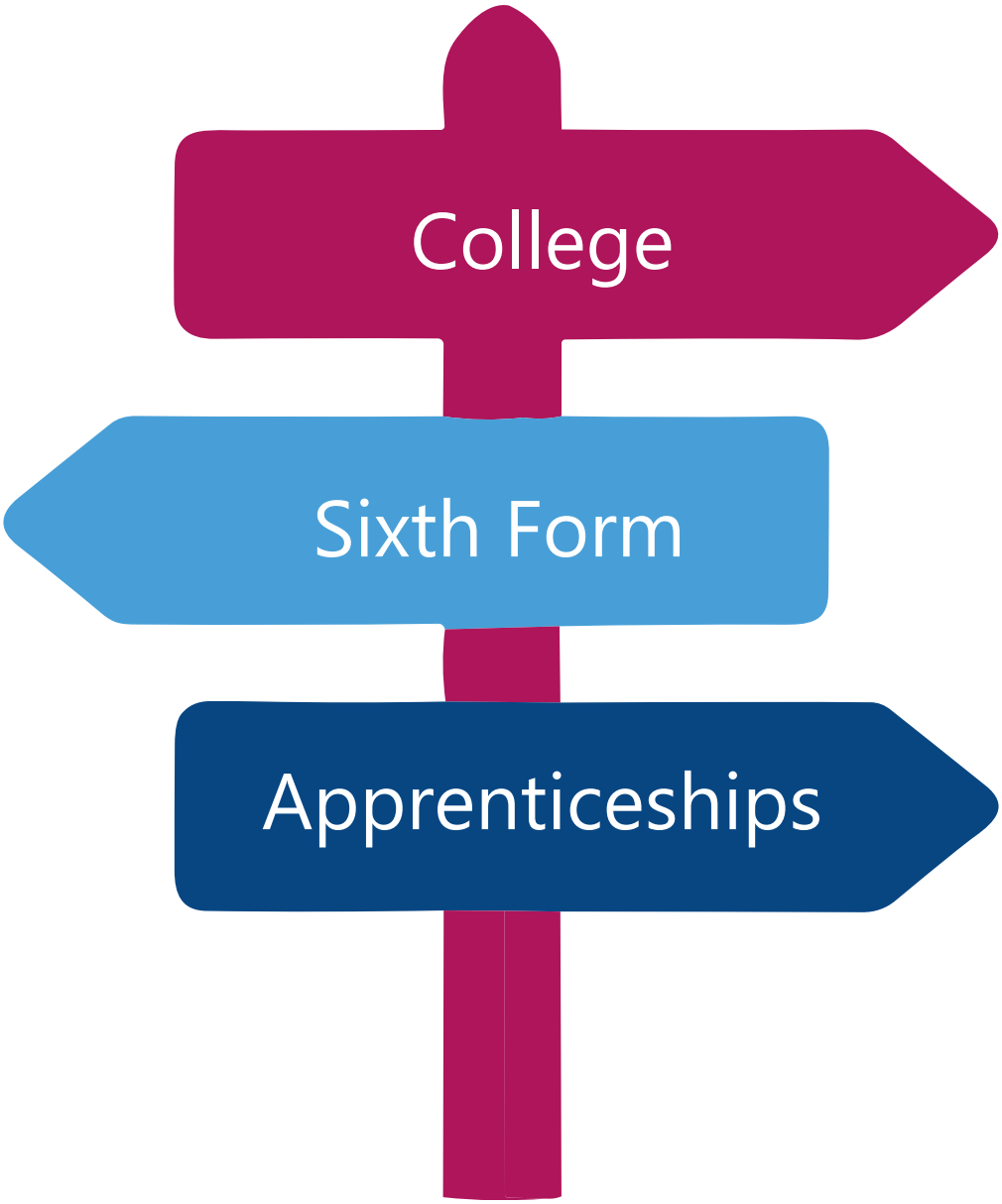
Ashby School
Empowered to Learn

GUIDE TO POST-16 PATHWAYS



PART OF THE LIFE MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

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Your Next Steps

There is no single “right” route after Year11. There are seven main routes a young person in England can take at 16. Many students combine routes - for example a Level 2 course first and a Level 3 course the year after.

Foundation & Level 1-2 courses
A stepping stone if you need GCSE grades or more time.

Apprenticeships
A paid job with training built in. From Level 2 upwards



A Levels
Classroom-based, exam-assessed subjects. Level 3

V Levels
New vocational Level 3 qualification, first taught from September 2027.

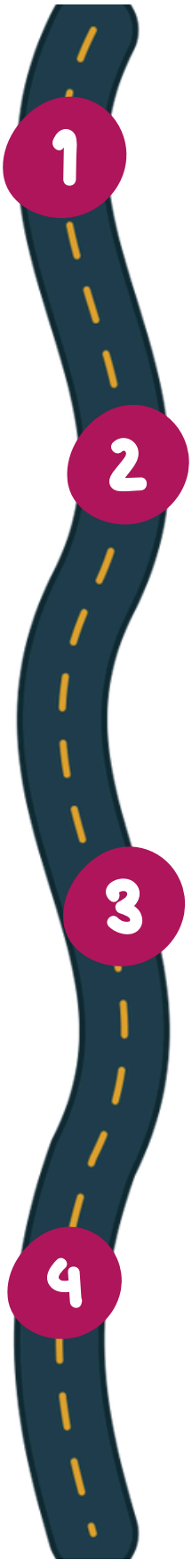
Alternative Academic Qualifications
Applied subjects such as BTECs, taken alone or with A Levels.

T Levels
Two-year technical course with a 45-day industy placement

Supported Internships
Workplace programme for young people aged 16-24 with an EHC plan.

Your Preparation Timeline

Good decisions are rarely made in a rush. Here is what to be thinking about, and doing, at each stage of the journey



SUMMER TERM, YEAR 10

Explore Widely

- Use Unifrog to look at careers, subjects and apprenticeships.
- Go to the Ashby Careers events and any college taster days.
- Talk at home about what you enjoy and what you are good at.
- Complete work experience if it is offered - and record it.

AUTUMN TERM, YEAR 11

Visit, shortlist and apply

- Attend open evenings — in October and November.
- Draw up a shortlist of two or three places, plus one back-up.
- Check entry requirements for the courses you want.
- Submit applications direct to each provider - by 20th Nov
- Start apprenticeship vacancy alerts if that route interests you.

SPRING TERM, YEAR 11

Apply and interview

- Complete submitting applications direct to each provider — watch their deadlines (usually by 31st January).
- Prepare for interviews or guidance meetings.
- Keep working: offers are usually conditional on GCSE grades.
- Apply for apprenticeship vacancies as they are advertised.

SUMMER TERM, YEAR 11

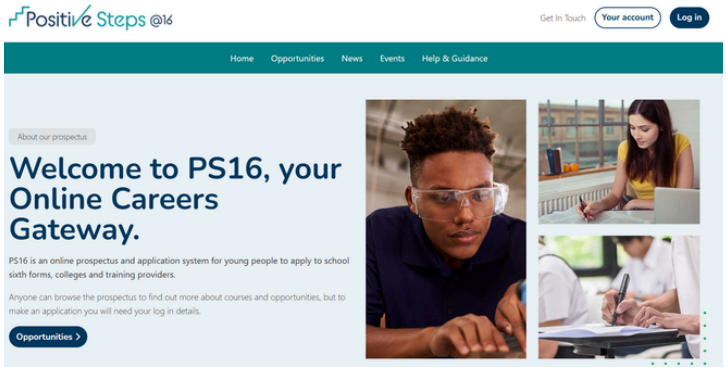
Confirm and prepare

- Accept your offer and complete any enrolment paperwork.
- Sort out transport, bursary applications and equipment.
- On results day, confirm your place — or use your back-up plan.
- If plans change, speak to Careers before results day is over.

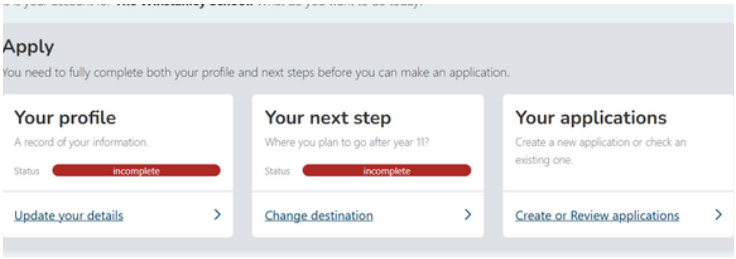
How to Apply

You will be making at least **2** applications at PS16.co.uk

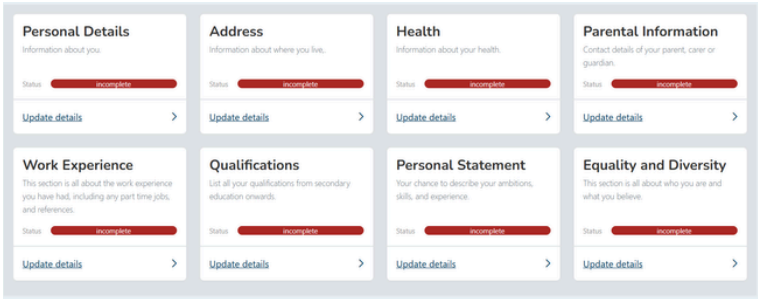
PS16 is a website where the majority of sixth forms/colleges advertise their courses. It means you can make one application to send to multiple providers.



These are the three sections you will need to complete

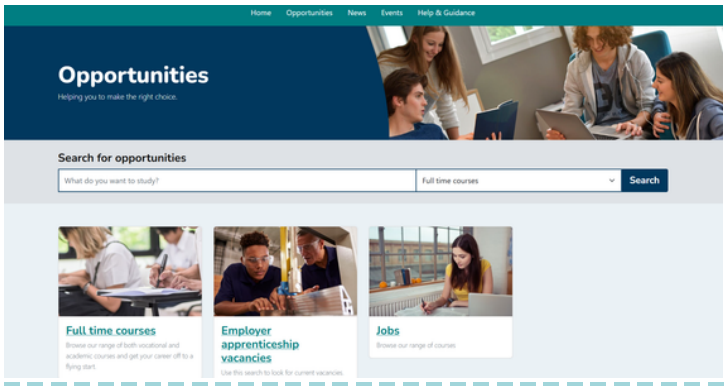


The longest part to complete is your personal profile. Once this is completed, it will copy over to every application that you make.

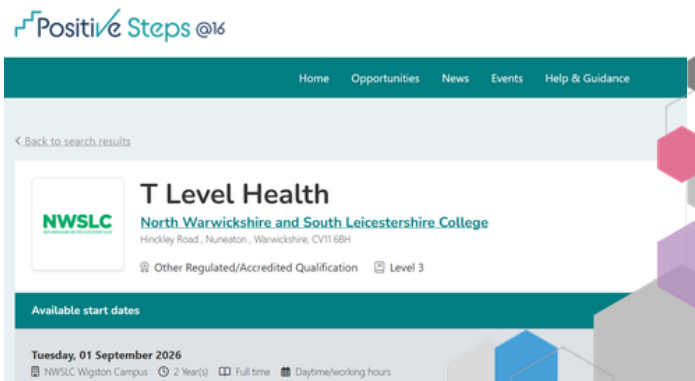


You can use the “Opportunities” tab at the stop to search for courses.

Clicking on “Full time providers” at the bottom will let you filter by provider and/or job sector.



Once the profile and next steps section are completed, you can start applying. If you click the heart icon on a course you are interested in, it will be saved to the “Your applications” section of your account. ALternatively, you can just click the “Apply” button on the course page.



Your Four Main Post-16 Options

Most routes fall into one of four families. They are not ranked - the best one is the one that fits how you learn and where you want to end up.

Academic

A Levels and other classroom-based Level 3 courses

- Usually three subjects over two years
- Assessed mainly by final exams
- The most common route to university

Good if you enjoy essays, exams and studying subjects in depth.

Vocational

Applied courses linked to a broad job area

- Includes applied qualifications such as BTECs
- Coursework and practical assessment as well as exams
- New V Levels first taught from September 2027 (TBC)

Good if you want to study a sector without commiting to one job yet.

Technical

T Levels - two-year courses built with employers

- One T Level is equivalent in size to three A Levels
- Includes a 45-day industry placement
- Earns UCAS points for university

Good if you know your industry and want real workplace time.

Apprenticeship

A paid job with training and study built in

- You are an employee, earning from day one
- At least 20% of working hours are training
- Levels 2 to 7, from GCSE-equivalent to degree

Good if you learn by doing and want to earn while you train

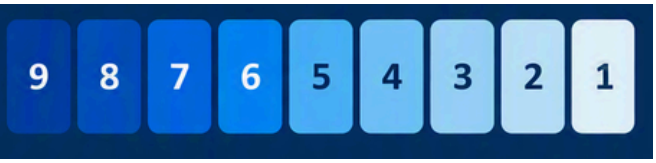
Also available: supported internships for young people aged 16-24 with an Education, Health Care plan - around 70% of the time is spent learning in the workplace, with a qualified job coach. Ask Careers for details

Grades, Levels and What They Mean

Post-16 courses are labelled by "level". Your GCSE grades decide which level you can start at — and you can move up a level each year.

GCSE grades run 9 (highest) to 1 (lowest).

Grade 4 is a standard pass. Grade 5 is a strong pass. Many Level 3 courses ask for a grade 5 or 6 in the subject you want to study.



Level 4+

Typically needs **Level 3**
Highers and degree apprenticeships, HNC's and HNDs, foundation degrees, bachelor's and master's degrees.
Universities and colleges set their own entry requirements.

Level 3

Typically needs **5 GCSEs at grade 4 or above**, often including English and maths
A Levels, T Levels, V Levels (from 2027), Alternative Academic Qualifications, advance apprenticeships, Level 3 diplomas.
Leads to university, higher apprenticeships or skilled work.

Level 2

Typically needs **GCSEs at grade 3**, sometimes with a grade 4 in English or maths
Level 2 diplomas and certificates, foundation apprenticeships, intermediate apprenticeships. GCSEs at grade 4-9 are themselves Level 2.
Leads on to a Level 3 course the following year.

Level 1 & Entry Level

Open to students still working towards GCSE passes
Level 1 awards, certificates and diplomas, functional skills and Entry Level qualifications. GCSEs at grades 1-3 sit at Level 1.
Builds confidence and skills to progress to Level 2.

Please note: Always check with the provider. Every sixth form and college sets its own entry requirements, and they can differ by subject - the grades above are a general guide only.

Local Providers Map

Ashby students travel in every direction. These are the main post-16 providers within a reasonable journey of Ashby-de-la-Zouch.



The five in this guide

Ashby School Sixth Form	Loughborough College	Burton & South Derbyshire College	Derby College	Tamworth College	Stephenson College
Ashby-de-la-Zouch	Loughborough	Burton Upon Trent	Derby	Tamworth	Coalville

Transport is one of the biggest practical factors in this decision. Check bus routes, journey times and costs before you apply - ask each provider what travel and support they offer.

ASHBY SCHOOL SIXTH FORM

Address: School House, Leicester Rd,
Ashby-de-la-Zouch, LE65 1DH
Website: www.ashbyschool.org.uk/sixth-form/
Phone: 01530 413748

What they offer

30 Level 3 courses across eight faculties:

Applied Science Level 3
Art & Design
Art & Design – (Textiles)
Biology
Business
Chemistry
Computer Science
Drama & Theatre Studies
Engineering
English Language
English Literature
Film Studies
Food Science and Nutrition (Level 3 Diploma)
French
Further Mathematics
Geography
German
Health & Social Care (Level 3)
History
Mathematics
Media
Music
Photography (Art & Design)
Physical Education
Physics
Psychology
Religious Studies
Sport (Cambridge Technical Level 3 Extended Certificate)
Core Maths
Extended Project

Loughborough College Group

Brooksby (near Melton Mowbray)
Ignite (in Melton Bowbray)
Loughborough College
Stephenson College (Coalville)

Website: www.loucoll.ac.uk/
Emails: enquiries@loucoll.ac.uk
Phone: 01509 618375

What they offer

A Levels, BTECs & Vocational, T Levels, Apprenticeships and Foundation courses.

Vocational and Subject Areas, on 4 campuses:
Loughborough (L), Brooksby (B), Stephenson (S), Ignite (I)

- Accounting (including AAT courses) (L)
- Childcare (L)
- Construction (S)
- Creative Arts (I & L)
- Electrical Installation (S & L)
- Engineering (S & L)
- Farming, Horticulture and Environmental (B)
- Hairdressing (S & L)
- Hospitality and Catering (L)
- Marketing (L)
- Motor Vehicle (S)
- Performing Arts (I)
- Plumbing and Heating (S)
- Public/Uniformed Services (L)
- STEM (L & S)
- Travel and Aviation (L)

General Entry Requirements:
Level 3: 5 x GCSE grade 4 or above inc English and Maths (subject specific requirements do apply for certain courses)
Level 2: 4 x GCSE grade 3 or above inc Englis and Maths
Level 1: No formal entry requirements

Burton and South Derbyshire College

Burton Town Centre Campus
Lichfield Street, Burton on Trent, DE14 3RL
Stephen Burke Construction Academy
21 Tetron Point, William Nadin Way, Swadlincote, DE11 OBB

Website:https://www.bsdc.ac.uk/
Telephone: 01283 494400
Email: enquiries@bsdc.ac.uk

What they offer:

Vocational ,Technical, Apprenticeships and subject courses on 2 campuses:

Burton Town Centre and Stephen Burke Construction Academy (SB)

Apprenticeships
Business & Administration
Catering & Hospitality
Childcare & Education
Computer Science
Construction (SB)
Creative Design & Digital Media
Engineering and Fab & Welding (some at SB)
ESOL
Finance & Accounting
Foundation Learning
GCSEs and Functional Skills
Hair & Beauty
Health & Social Care and Science
Motor Vehicle
Performing Arts
Public Services
Sport
Travel and Tourism

Derby College

The Roundhouse
Joseph Wright Centre
Broomfield Hall
Ikestone

Website: https://www.derby-college.ac.uk
Telephone: 0800 028 0289
Email: enquiries@derby-college.ac.uk

What they offer:

A levels, Vocational ,Technical, Apprenticeships and subject courses on 4 campuses:

South Staffordshire College

Tamworth College

Website: https://www.southstaffs.ac.uk/
Email: info@southstaffs.ac.uk
Telephone: 03004562424

What they offer:

Vocational ,Technical and subject courses.

Local College and Sixth Form Open Events

College/SixthForm	Date	Time
Ashby Sixth Form	Saturday 31st October 2026 Wednesday 4th November 2026 Saturday 14th November 2026	12:30 – 15:00 17:00 – 19:00 10:00 – 12:30
Burton and South Derbyshire College - Town Centre Campus	Saturday 17th October 2026 Monday 23rd November 2026 Monday 25th January 2027 Saturday 17th April 2027	10:00 – 13:00 17:00 – 19:00 17:00 – 19:00 10:00 – 13:00
- Stephen Burke Construction Academy	Saturday 14th November 2026 Monday 8th February 2027	10:00 – 12:00 17:00 – 19:00
Derby College - The Joseph Wright Centre	Thursday 22nd October 2026 Thursday 4th February 2027	17:00 – 19:00 17:00 – 19:00
- The Roundhouse	Thursday 15th October 2026 Thursday 12th November 2026 Thursday 11th February 2027 (Apprenticeship focus)	17:00 – 19:00 17:00 – 19:00 17:00 – 19:00
- Broomfield Hall	Wednesday 21st October 2026 Wednesday 24th February 2027 ~~Saturday 12th June 2027~~	17:00 – 19:00 17:00 – 19:00 9:00 – 12:00
Loughborough College Group - Loughborough College	Saturday 3rd October 2026 Saturday 14th November 2026 Saturday 5th December 2026 Thursday 25th February 2027 Saturday 8th May 2027	9:30 – 13:00 9:30 – 13:00 9:30 – 13:00 17:15 – 19:15 9:30 – 12:00
- Stephenson College	Tuesday 29th September 2026 Saturday 7th November 2026 Tuesday 9th February 2027 (Apprenticeship focus) Saturday 10th April 2027 Thursday 24th June 2027	17:15 – 19:15 9:30 – 13:00 16:00 – 18:00 9:30 – 13:00 16:30 – 18:30
- Brooksby College	Saturday 10th October 2026 Saturday 28th November 2026 Saturday 6th March 2027 Saturday 15th May 2027	9:30 – 13:00 9:30 – 13:00 9:30 – 13:00 9:30 – 13:00
- IGNITE	Tuesday 17th November 2026 Saturday 30th January 2027	17:15 – 19:15 10:00 – 12:00

Apprenticeships Explained

Earn While You Learn

An apprenticeship is a real job with training built in. You are employed from day one, you earn a wage, and you work towards a nationally recognised qualification.

20%
of your working hours must be spent on training and study

£8
per hour minimum apprentice rate from 1 April 2026

8 months to 6 years
typical length, depending on level

The four apprenticeship levels

Foundation/Intermediate	LEVEL 2	Equivalent to GCSEs
Advanced	LEVEL 3	Equivalent to A Levels
Higher	LEVEL 4-7	Equivalent to a foundation degree or above
Degree	LEVEL 6-7	Equivalent to a bachelor's or master's degree

Where to look

Find an apprenticeship https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship - the official government service for searching and applying for apprenticeship vacancies in England.

Amazing Apprenticeships https://www.amazingapprenticeships.com/ - student and parent guides, application help and a higher and degree apprenticeship vacancy listing.

Reaching the Point of Application

This guide is for anyone who is at the point of application for an apprenticeship. If you haven't found an apprenticeship yet, this is what you need to do to get to the point of application:

Do you know what an apprenticeship is?

YES

NO

Visit our Apprenticeships page:

amazingapprenticeships.com/apprenticeships

SCAN ME

Have you set up an account on Find an Apprenticeship?

NO

Go to Find an Apprenticeship and create a free account: gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship

SCAN ME

YES

Do you have a CV ready? Or a list of achievements and qualifications?

NO

Create a CV. Have a look here to help you:

amapps.uk/cv

SCAN ME

YES

Have you researched apprenticeship employers?

NO

Visit our Meet the Employer platform to explore apprentice employers and what their application processes involve.

amapps.uk/mte

SCAN ME

YES

Are you clear on the types of roles you want to apply for?

NO

Explore:

- Apprenticeship standards: amapps.uk/a-zstandards
- Vacancies on Find an Apprenticeship (step 1)
- Employers on Meet the Employer (step 3)

YES

Let's get started!

amazingapprenticeships.com

Local Employers

Here are some local employers offering levels 2 and 3 apprenticeships:

https://llbsp.org.uk/skills/information-resources-for-young-people/

Links for Further Support

Useful Websites

Ashby School Careers Hub
Explore Careers | National Careers Service
Prospects.ac.uk
Unifrog.org
Springpod.com | Virtual Work Experience Opportunities
Voluntary Action Leicestershire
BarclaysLifeSkills.com
Information and resources for young people

Apprenticeships

Gov.UK | Find an Apprenticeship
Amazing Apprenticeships | Information and Advice for Students
Search Apprenticeships and Jobs for School Leavers | allaboutschoolleavers.co.uk
Not Going To Uni

Local Labour Market Information

Leicester & Leicestershire Business and Skills Partnership
Leicestershire World of Work Booklet [pdf]

If you need further support, please contact The Ashby School Careers Team at
careersevents@ashbyschool.org.uk
Mrs Marlow - Careers Adviser
Mrs James - Careers Lead

My Career Action Plan

A career action plan is a way to start thinking about what you want to do in the future, setting career goals, and planning the steps you need to take to achieve them. Start your plan today and take the first step toward your dream career!

I would like to be:

The reasons I chose this are:

Qualifications and training required:

My next steps are:

Reviewing my progress:

Notes