

FUTURES TOOL KIT



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Pathway to YOUR future

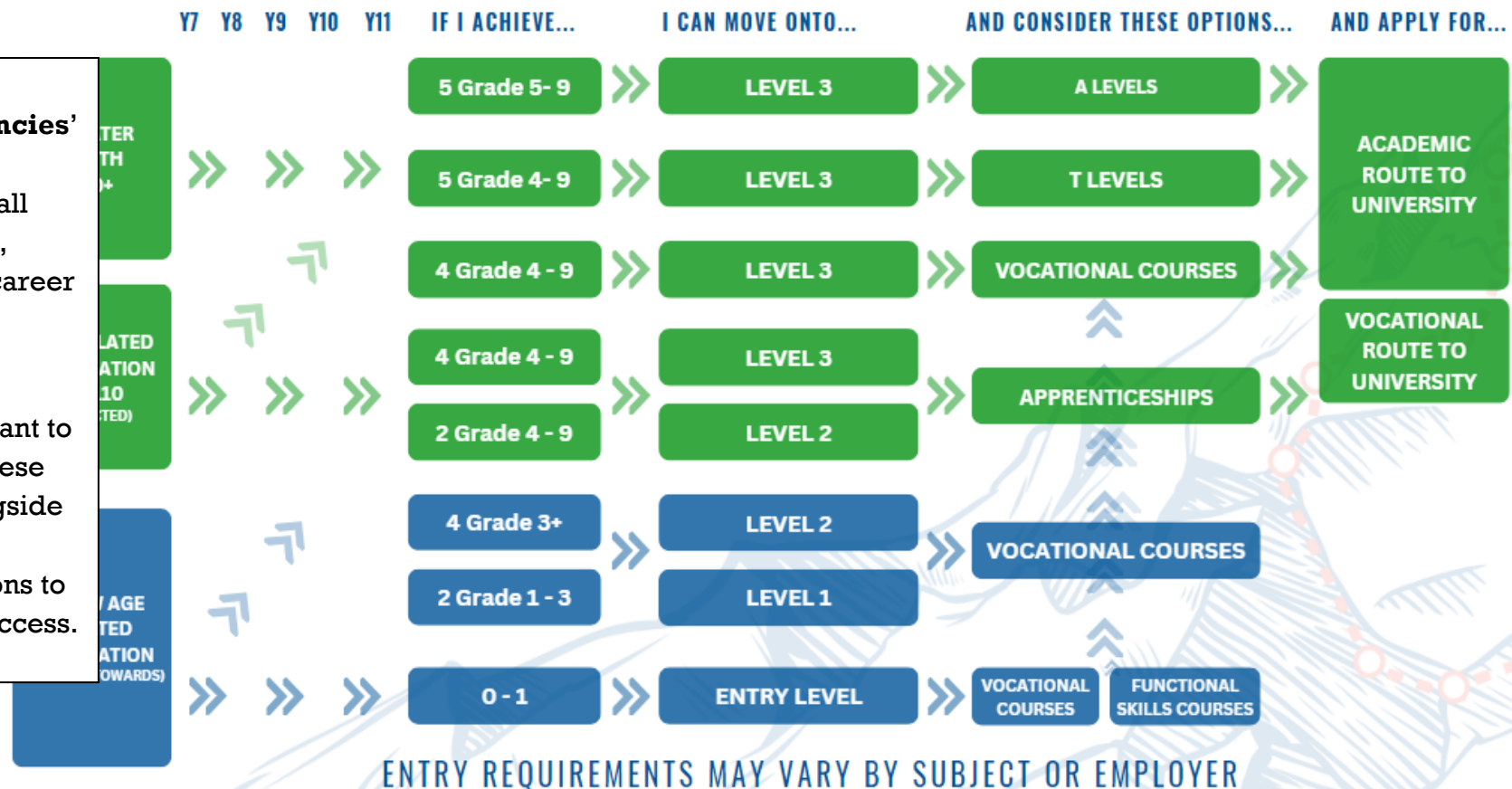


COMMUNICATION PROBLEM SOLVING SELF-CONFIDENCE TEAMWORK RESILIENCE SELF-AWARENESS INTEGRITY TIME MANAGEMENT POSITIVITY

USE THE INFORMATION BELOW TO UNDERSTAND THE OPTIONS AVAILABLE

These 'Competencies' (Skills) are valued by all employers, whatever career path you choose.

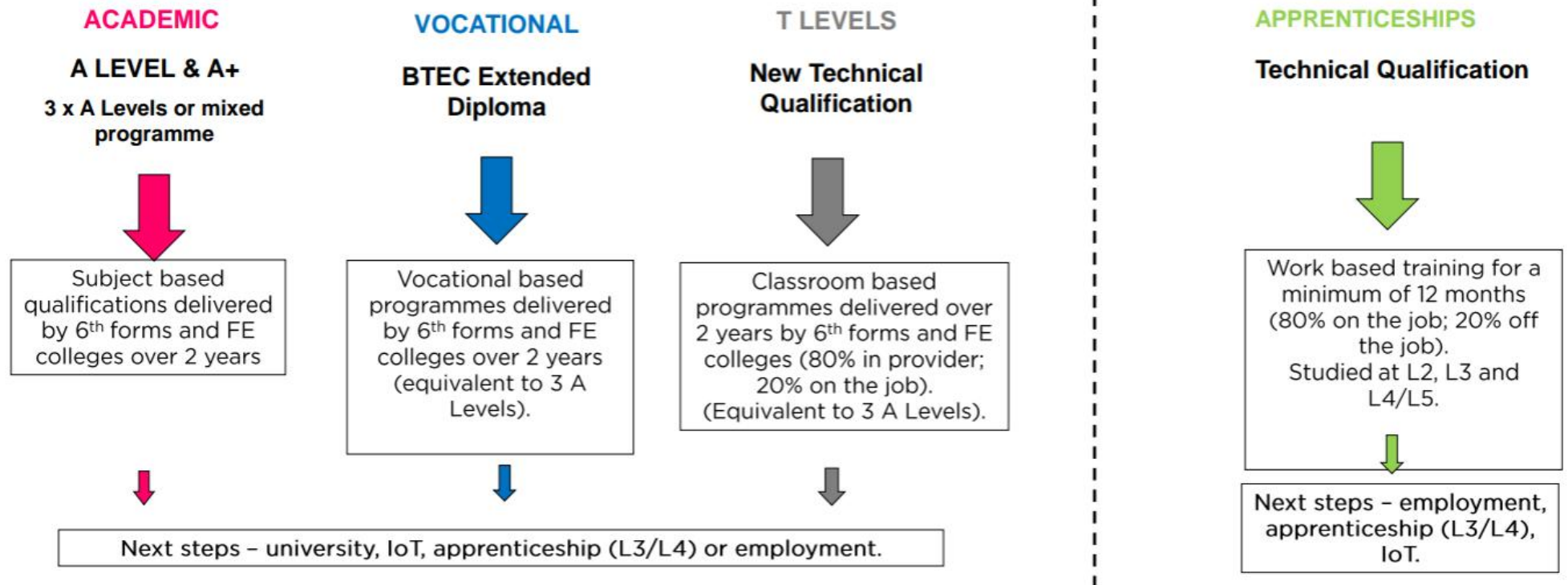
It is important to develop these skills alongside your qualifications to achieve success.



Work your way across the chart to see what level and type of qualifications you could move onto, depending on your GCSE grades at the end of Year 11.

Everyone learns and achieves at different rates and will take different routes to their end goal. Wherever you are on the chart, you have the opportunity to progress, provided you are focused and engaged in your learning.

After Year 11 - Level 3 Options



IoT – The Stafford Institute of Technology (IoT) is a recently opened, employer-led education hub that aims to increase opportunities in higher technical education. Developed in partnership with local colleges, Keele University and Axia Solutions, the multi-million-pound facility provides learners with access to cutting-edge equipment, modern teaching spaces and industry-focused training designed to meet the skills demands of both today's and tomorrow's employers.

For more information see [Institute of Technology | NSCG](#)

Academic - A Level

Graded A* - E

If this is you:	You'll need:	Your programme of study will include:
• Good at exams • Can commit to +95% attendance • Want to progress onto university / higher apprenticeship • Able to work independently outside the classroom	• Minimum of 5 GCSE grade 5 – 9s, including English and maths • Additional entry requirements for some subjects	• 3 subjects over 2 years • Independent study, regular homework and revision • Progression exams in year 1 and final exams in year 2

A Level Subjects on Offer:

Art	Environmental Science	Media Studies
Biology	Film Studies	Philosophy, Religion & Ethics
Business	Further Maths	Photography
Chemistry	Geography	Physical Education
Computer Science	Graphic Design	Physics
Drama & Theatre	History	Politics
Economics	Illustration & Animation	Psychology
English Language	Law	Sociology
English Literature	Maths	

Vocational – BTEC Extended Diplomas

Graded D*D*D* - PPP

If this is you:	You'll need:	Your programme of study will include:
• Organised to undertake coursework and exams • Can commit to +95% attendance • Want to progress onto university / higher apprenticeship • Able to work independently outside the classroom	• Minimum of 4 GCSE grade 4 – 9s, including English and/or maths	• 2-year programme • Independent study • Work Experience • Tutorials • Internal and External assessments during Years 1 and 2

Vocational and Skills Based Courses on Offer:

Acting	E-Sports	Music Production
Applied Science	Fashion & Textiles	Musical Theatre
Art & Design	Games Design, Animation	Performing Engineering Operation (PEO)
Beauty Therapy	Graphic Design	Photography
Bricklaying *	Hairdressing *	Plumbing *
Business	Health & Social Care	Production Arts
Carpentry & Joinery *	Hospitality & Catering *	Sport
Construction Skills *	Information Technology	Sport & Exercise Science
Criminology	Law	Travel & Tourism with Events
Dance	Light Vehicle Maintenance *	TV & Film Production
Electrical Installation *	Media, Graphics & Photography	Uniformed Protective Services
Engineering	Music Performance	

* May need to start on a Level 1 or Level 2 course, irrespective of GCSE grades, to gain trade specific skills before progressing to a higher level.

T Level - Technical Qualification

Graded Distinction* - Pass

If this is you:	You'll need:	Your programme of study will include:
• Good at external assessment (including exams) • Can commit to +95% attendance • Want to progress onto university / higher apprenticeship or employment • Want to gain hands on work experience in a specific area of employment • Have a specific career choice in mind	• A minimum of 5 GCSEs at grade 5 or above, in English and maths and subjects relevant to your course. • Additional entry requirements may apply dependent upon your chosen T Level / subject area.	• 2 Year programme • 80% classroom / 20% industry placement • Tutorials • Independent study • External assessments during year 1 and 2

T Level Choices:

Building Services Engineering for Construction (Electrotechnical Engineering)	Digital Software & Website Development	Laboratory Sciences
Building Services Engineering for Construction (Plumbing & Heating Engineering)	Digital Cybersecurity	Legal Services (Crime, Criminal Justice & Social Welfare)
Business Management & Administration	Education & Early Years (Assisting Teaching)	Legal Services (Business, Finance & Employment)
Craft & Design (Ceramics)	Education & Early Years (Supporting Early Years)	Marketing
Design & Development for Manufacturing & Engineering (Electrical)	Finance	Media, Broadcast & Production (Content Creation)
Design & Development for Manufacturing & Engineering (Mechanical)	Health (Adult Nursing)	*Care Services – new for 2028/29 entry
Design, Surveying & Planning for Construction	Health (Midwifery)	*Sports Fitness & Exercise Science – new for 2028 /29 entry

V Levels – New for 2026 / 27 entry

Grading Scale to be confirmed

If this is you:	You'll need:	Your programme of study will include:
• Want to progress onto university / higher apprenticeship or employment • Prefer applied learning • Want to study a mix of subjects • Mix of external (40%) and internal (60%) (assessment)	Entry requirements to be confirmed	• Vocational based programmes delivered over 2 years • <i>(Each is equivalent to 1A-Level).</i> • <i>Can be combined with other V Levels or A Levels</i> • Expected to include applied learning, practical assessment and non-exam assessment

V Level Choices for 2026 / 27 entry *

Digital	Education & Early Years	Finance & Accounting
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- Full roll out of subjects to be complete by 2030 / 31.

- BTEC Extended Diplomas to be withdrawn as V Levels phased in

One glance: what is actually different?

	 A LEVELS	 V LEVELS	 T LEVELS	 APPRENTICESHIPS
 BEST FOR	 Subject-focused	 Applied learner	 Occupation-focused	 Employment-ready
 LEARNING	 Academic	 Applied	 Technical	 Workplace
 BREADTH	 Broad	 Flexible	 Specialist	 Highly specific
 STRUCTURE	 Usually 3 subjects	 Smaller subjects	 1 large programme	 Job + training
 NEXT STEPS	 HE + wider	 HE + HTQ + work	 HE + HTQ + work	 Employment + higher AP



Different does not mean better or worse.

Apprenticeships

If this is you:	You'll need:	Your programme of study will include:
• Organised to complete coursework and external assessment (EPA – End Point Assessment). • Want to put what you learn into practice. • Not afraid to tackle new challenges. • Reliable and committed. • Want to earn as you learn. • May want to progress onto a higher-level apprenticeship or IOT.	• Entry requirements vary by employer and job role but will generally need at least GCSE grade 4 or above in English and maths for a Level 2 (Intermediate) apprenticeship. • To secure a work placement with an employer.	• 1 – 4 year programme depending on the level of apprenticeship qualification. • Employment with a local company and learning on the job. • College work 1 day a week (on average). • Produce assignments and portfolio of work. • Final assessment through external end point assessment (EPA).

Apprenticeship Employment Areas Include:

(Subject to the availability and securement of an employer placement)

Accounting	Early Years	IT Technician / Cyber Security
Adult Care	Electrical Installation	Motor Vehicle
Business Administration / Customer Service	Engineering	Pharmacy Technician
Ceramic Industry	Gas Engineering	Plant Maintenance
Construction: Brick, Carpentry & Joinery, Painter & Decorator, Property Maintenance, Roofer	Hair Professional	Plumbing & Heating Technician
Digital Marketing	Healthcare	Teaching Assistant
Digital Software Development	Hospitality & Catering	

Apprenticeship FAQs

Are there different levels of apprenticeships?

Yes...

You can work up from Level 2 (Intermediate) to Level 7 (Degree Level).

Not all companies offer progression up to level 7, so check what level you need to achieve in order to qualify for the job you want. Find out how far can you progress with any company you apply to?

Am I guaranteed an apprenticeship?

No...

Colleges and training providers advertise apprenticeships, but you will be expected to find your own work placement before you can start. ***You can't do an apprenticeship without a placement.***

Not all employers take on apprentices so you will need to be prepared to spend time searching for vacancies, completing application forms and going for interviews.

Competition for vacancies is high, so make sure you also apply for a back-up option such as a full-time college course in a related subject.

A college course or a pre-apprenticeship with a training provider (see later section), helps you build the skills and experience employers are looking for and can be an excellent 'stepping stone' unto an apprenticeship. You can transfer onto an apprenticeship as soon as you secure an employer placement.

How can employers tell if I have the skills and personal qualities they are looking for?

An employer will ask school for a **reference** to check your attendance, timekeeping and behaviour record.

You will have to explain in your application form and at interview why you will suit the work, using examples of things that you have done at school, in your free time or on work experience, to back up what you are saying.

Apprenticeship FAQs contd.

Which Apprenticeship is for you?

An apprenticeship will train you for a specific job, so you need to know what job you want to do long term. If you are unsure, explore other training options that keep your career paths open for longer and allow you more time to decide.

Find out what apprenticeships are available in your area, or an area you would be willing to travel to.

Think about subjects and activities you are good at and enjoy, and link them to possible job roles.

Remember, for some traditional careers such as medicine, veterinary science, dentistry etc you will not be able to take an apprenticeship training route at this stage, so research the training routes for careers you are considering.

Websites for further research

Find out about your career ideas before choosing:

www.careerpilot.org.uk

<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/explore-careers>

Information about apprenticeships :

[Become an apprentice \(apprenticeships.gov.uk\)](http://becomeanapprentice.apprenticeships.gov.uk)

Register and search for apprenticeship vacancies :

[Find an apprenticeship - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://findanapprenticeship.gov.uk)

www.indeed.co.uk Search for 'apprenticeship' in 'Stoke on Trent'

www.yell.com Search for businesses in your area that you could contact by phone or letter and ask if they recruit apprentices.

HOW DO I GET AN APPRENTICESHIP?

1. Choose a job role

- What job will you enjoy long term?
- What job will you be good at?

2. Search for vacancies

- Websites
- Contact companies direct
- Ask Friends and Family

3. Check entry requirements listed on the job advert

- Do you have the skills and qualifications the employer is looking for?

4. Apply before the application deadline

- **Doing a good application takes time – it is not a 5-minute task!**
- Evidence the skills and qualities the employer is looking for.
- Submit your application before the closing date.

5. Prepare for interview

- Research the company
- Practice your answers
- Dress for the occasion
- Prepare some questions to ask

6. Interview

- Arrive early
- Smile and give eye contact
- Check when you will hear the outcome of the interview
- Thank the interviewer for their time

7. **JOB OFFER** or **KEEP TRYING!**

TOP TIPS

1. Start searching for vacancies early.

Some companies do their recruitment between October and January of Y11. Others will wait until later in the spring, so you need to regularly check vacancy websites to avoid missing out on opportunities.

2. Make multiple applications.

Most applicants are not successful to begin with. Practice makes perfect!

3. Evidence the skills and qualities the employer is looking for.

In your application and at interview, use examples of things you have done in school, on work experience or in your free time to show you are the right person for the job. Explain a specific task you undertook, the skills you used, the outcome you achieved and what you learnt from the experience. Consider if there is anything you would do differently next time to improve the end result.

4. You are not guaranteed an apprenticeship...

Apply for a back-up option by January of Year 11 e.g. a college course in a related subject.

If you find an apprenticeship by September, college will cancel your full-time place.

If you do not find an apprenticeship and do not have a back-up plan, you will have a substantial gap after leaving school on your CV. This will look bad to prospective employers and can make it more difficult to get an apprenticeship.

Training Providers

Training Providers (e.g. Martec / Equality / Nacro / Landau) are much smaller than college and normally have smaller group sizes. Training providers offer pre-apprenticeship courses and focus on a 'work-based learning' progression route to help you move on to an apprenticeship / employment within your chosen vocational area.



[Nacro Education Stoke-on-Trent | Vocational Training | Nacro](#)



[eQuality Training - Hanley](#)



[All Courses – Martec Training](#)



[Training & Learning - Landau](#)

Transition Support

Leaving school and moving onto the next stage, can feel daunting and cause anxiety for both students and parents / carers but there are many sources of support to provide answers to your questions and help you settle in.

Stoke on Trent College

Counselling and Mentoring Support [Counselling and Mentoring - Stoke-on-Trent College :Stoke-on-Trent College \(stokecoll.ac.uk\)](#)

Learning Support [Support for Students - Stoke-on-Trent College :Stoke-on-Trent College \(stokecoll.ac.uk\)](#)

Financial Support [Aged 16-18 - Stoke-on-Trent College :Stoke-on-Trent College \(stokecoll.ac.uk\)](#)

City of Stoke on Trent 6th Form College

Pre-joining activities and support for new students [Get Ready for Sixth Form - City of Stoke-on-Trent College Sixth Form College \(stokesfc.ac.uk\)](#)

Student Services (Learning, Safeguarding and Finance Support) [Student Services - City of Stoke-on-Trent College Sixth Form College \(stokesfc.ac.uk\)](#)

Parent & Carer Information [Parent & Carer Information - City of Stoke-on-Trent College Sixth Form College \(stokesfc.ac.uk\)](#)

NSCG

Student Services (Academic, Learning, Safeguarding and Financial Support) [Student Support | NSCG](#)

College & School 6th Form Open Events 2026/27

Stoke College (Cauldon & Burslem)

01782 208208

Wednesday 14th October 2026

5pm - 8.00pm

Wednesday 18th November 2026

5pm – 8.000pm

Wednesday 10th February 2027

5pm – 8.00pm

Saturday 8th May 2027

10am – 1:00pm



Newcastle College

01782 254212

Thursday 8th October 2026

5.30pm – 8:00pm

Wednesday 11th November 2026

5.30pm – 8:00pm

Saturday 23rd January 2027

10:00am - 12noon

Saturday 24th April 2027

10:00am - 12noon



Leek College

Wednesday 4th November 2027

5:00pm – 7:00pm

Saturday 20th March 2027

10am – 12:00noon

Saturday 19th June 2027

10am – 12:00noon



College & School 6th Form Open Events 2024/25 contd.

Stafford College

Thursday 22 nd October 2026	5.30pm – 8:00pm
Wednesday 25th November 2026	5.30pm – 8:00pm
Saturday 6th February 2027	10:00am - 12noon
Saturday 8th May 2027	10:00am - 12noon



City of Stoke-On-Trent 6th Form College 01782 848736

Wednesday 7th October 2026	5:00pm – 7:00pm
Tuesday 17th November 2026	5:00pm – 7:00pm
Thursday 11th March 2027	5:00pm – 7:00pm



Reaseheath College

01270 625131

Please check college website for times

Saturday 26 th September 2026
Saturday 17 th October 2026
Tuesday 10 th November 2026
Saturday 28 th November 2026
Saturday 30th January 2027
Saturday 20 th March 2027
Saturday 24 th April 2027



College & School 6th Form Open Events 2026/27 contd.

School 6th Forms - Please check school websites to confirm details.

- **St Joseph's 6th Form College** - [Sixth Form – St Joseph's College](#) see website for details
- **St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy 6th Form** - [Sixth Form | St Margaret Ward](#) **Thursday 11th Sept 5:30 – 8:00pm**
- **St John Fisher** – [SJF Sixth Form](#) - **Thursday 15 October** - see website for times
- **St Thomas More Catholic College** – [Sixth Form - St Thomas More Catholic Academy](#) see website for details

Training Providers - Please check websites to confirm details.

- **Martec Training 01782 717272** <https://www.martectraining.co.uk/>
- **Equality Training 01785 815115** <https://equality.training/>
- **Nacro Training 01782 332699** <https://www.nacro.org.uk/nacro-services/nacro-education/nacro-education-stoke-on-trent/>

FAQs

What are open events and who can attend?

All the local colleges, 6th forms and training providers hold open events for year 11s and parents /carers. They are an ideal way of finding out what it will be like to study at the provider and what is included in courses that interest you. You will have the opportunity to speak to teaching staff and current students, and ask any questions you may have.

When do I need to apply by?

Ideally by Christmas of year 11, so that after Christmas you can focus on final preparations for your GCSE exams.

NSCG have an official closing date for applications of 31 March 2027, however, earlier applications are advised to ensure availability of places on more popular courses.

How many colleges and courses can I apply for?

It is a good idea to apply for more than one college or course in case you change your mind, or don't get the GCSE grades you were hoping for. You can decide which to start when you get your GCSE results.

I haven't got my GCSE results yet so how can I apply to college?

Use your predicted grades which you can obtain from your form tutor. The college will use these as an indication of the level you are working at, but won't confirm your place/starting level until you get your GCSE results in August.

FAQS contd.

What happens if I don't achieve the grades I need for my chosen course?

Still attend your college enrollment appointment; They may be able to offer you a course similar to the one you selected, or they may be able to offer you your chosen course but at a lower level, or they will refer you to another college or provider that would be more suitable.

What happens if I change my mind about the course I want to do, after I have applied?

Contact the college you have applied to and ask if you can change your course. They are generally happy to do this, subject to the availability of places.

What do I do if I am going to be away on holiday on GCSE results day?

Contact the school exams officer before the end of the summer term to discuss alternative collection arrangements. Your results are confidential, personal information so we cannot pass them onto someone else, without your prior written permission.

If your results are not collected in person on GCSE results morning, you may have to wait until the start of term in September, when school reopens.

You will not be able to enroll and start at college, a training provider or on an apprenticeship without your results.

What do I do if I am going to be away on holiday during college enrollment?

Contact the college before the end of June 2027 to explain your situation and ask whether alternative enrolment arrangements can be made, otherwise your place may be at risk.

Choosing a Career - Unifrog

Choosing a career takes time and there are thousands of jobs to choose from, many of which you may not be familiar with...

➤ **Don't forget, many jobs that exist now hadn't been heard of 10 years ago.**

E.g. Drone Operator, App developer, Cloud Architect, Social Media Influencer, Sustainability Engineer.

➤ **And in another 10-years' time, there will be jobs that haven't yet been thought of...**

So where do you start?

Unifrog is a great interactive website to help you learn more about your skills, talents and careers that may suit you.

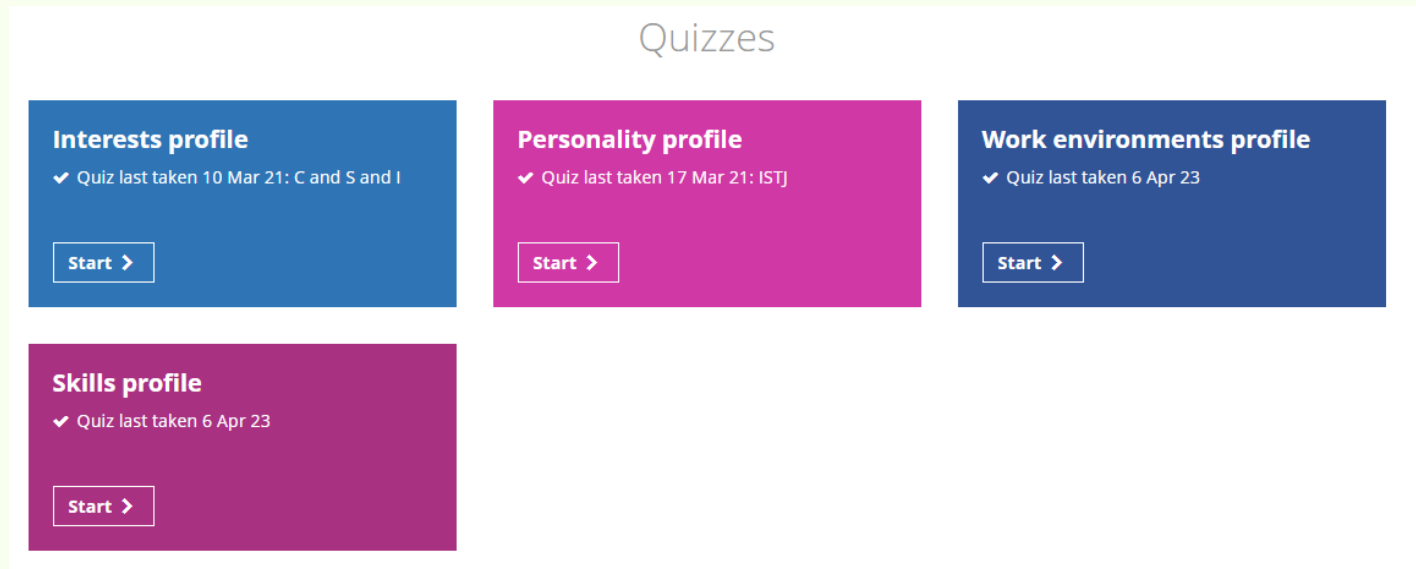
➤ **Login to Unifrog - [Sign In - Unifrog](#)**

Your username, is your school email address.

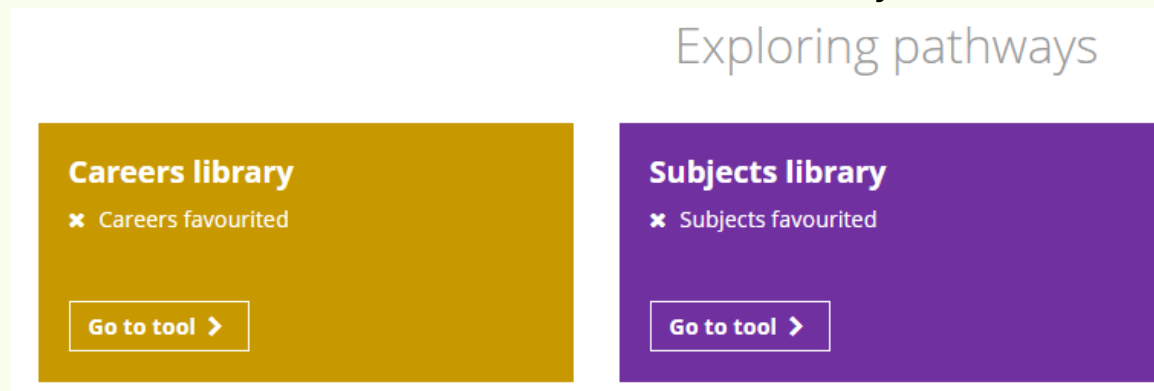
You can reset your password if you can't remember it.

Not sure what job will suit you?

- On the Home Page, scroll down and complete the quizzes to find out about your personality and careers that may suit you.



- On the Home Page, scroll down and click on the Careers Library or Subjects Library. Explore careers by key search words, such as 'Health,' or careers linked to subjects that interest you.



Discussion Topics / Things to Consider

It is often easier to make decisions about our future, if over time we talk through our ideas with friends, family and school staff who know us well.



As you use Unifrog to find out about careers that interest you, consider the following questions;

What will you do on a typical day in the job role? Will you enjoy this long term?

What might be challenging or difficult about the job? Would it stop you from doing the job?

What training and qualifications will you need? How long will it take to achieve these? Are you prepared to do this?

What could you expect to earn in the job? Will this give you the lifestyle you are looking for?

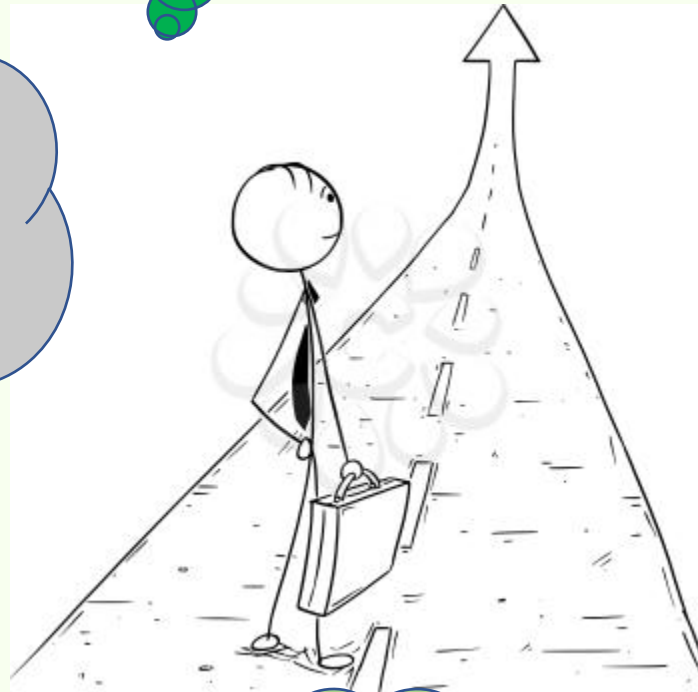
(Average salary in Stoke on Trent is about £33000 / year or £37000 / year nationally)

What skills and personal qualities will you need for the job? Do you have these? Could you develop them or do you need to rethink your job goal?

If the type of job you want to do isn't available locally would you move?

Do you want to stay living in the local area – if so, what jobs are available?

What hours will you be expected to work? Would you work shifts, evenings or weekends if required?



Labour Market Information – L.M.I.

The type of jobs available to you, will vary by local area and region.

It is therefore important to find out what types of jobs are available in your local area, or consider how you feel about relocating, if the job role you want isn't available within travelling distance of home.

Key employment sectors in Stoke on Trent:

- **Advanced Manufacturing** – This sector uses modern technology to make products more efficiently and to a higher standard. Careers often require skills and qualifications in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM). Examples of local employers include JCB, Alstom, Jaguar Land Rover and Zytex Automotive.
- **Construction** – Construction offers a wide range of careers, from labouring and skilled trades to professional and management roles. The industry is becoming more diverse, with increasing numbers of women entering the workforce. Local employers include Seddon, Kier, Amey UK, Balfour Beatty, Bowmer & Kirkland and Wilmott Dixon alongside many smaller businesses.
- **Digital and Creative** - This fast-growing sector includes careers in software development, IT support, digital media and creative industries. Growth is particularly strong in the energy, healthcare and entertainment sectors. Local employers include Navman Wireless, Quiss Technology and Koko Digital.
- **Distribution and Logistics** – this sector focuses on the movement, storage and delivery of goods. Career opportunities range from warehouse and transport roles to higher-level positions in planning, scheduling, finance and management. Major employers include Amazon, New Look, Dunelm and TK Maxx.
- **Health and Social Care** – The largest employment sector in Staffordshire, Health and Social Care continues to grow due to an ageing population. Careers are available in hospitals, care homes, childcare, social work, dental services and education, with excellent progression opportunities.
- **Tourism and Leisure** – This sector supports Staffordshire's visitor economy and includes careers in hospitality, events, attractions and customer service. Key employers and attractions include Alton Towers, Drayton Manor, Trentham Gardens and the county's ceramics-related tourism industry.

➤ For more information see: [Economic bulletin | Staffordshire County Council](#)

Further Support

Alpha Academies Trust Careers Advisor:

Karen Harrison



Kharrison1@thediscoveryacademy.co.uk



07930 894 693

As a Level 6 qualified Careers Guidance Practitioner, I provide impartial one-to-one Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) to pupils as they prepare for their GCSEs and make decisions about their post-16 education, training and career pathways.

Parents and carers are welcome to attend these meetings. If you would like to join, please contact me in advance to make arrangements.

If you have any questions about your son or daughter's next steps, please do not hesitate to get in touch using the contact details above.

