

Main Post-16 Options for Y11s, guide for Tutors

Below are the main Post-16 options and pathways available to Y11 students.

Post-16 Options & Pathways

There are two main options and pathways available to our Year 11 students; to remain in full-time **Education** or start work through an **Apprenticeship**.

EDUCATION

Within the Education option there are two main pathways available after Year 11: the academic and the vocational/technical.

ACADEMIC – essentially, this is the A Level pathway at 6th Form.

As you all know, it is classroom-based study, focused on the acquisition of knowledge of academic subjects and assessed via exams at the end of the two-year course. The most popular route to university, A levels are designed for students who enjoy and perform well in a school setting. **Grade 5 at GCSE is the minimum** entry requirement of 6th Forms, but higher grades are usually expected.

Sacred Heart students are fortunate to be surrounded by a large number of high performing 6th Forms; including St Dominic's and Harrow 6th Form Collegiate

For detailed advice and guidance on selecting **which A Levels to study**, we strongly recommend the Informed Choices guide by the Russell Group <https://www.informedchoices.ac.uk/> and then the universities admissions website, UCAS <https://www.ucas.com/> for specific guidance on which A Level or BTEC subjects and/or grades individual universities demand for specific degree courses.

VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL – essentially, this is still the BTEC pathway at a FE College.

BTECs are a combination of classroom and practical study, focused on the acquisition of knowledge and skills linked to an industry, trade or profession and is mainly assessed through coursework. The Level 3 Extended Diploma is a two-year course, equivalent to 3 A Levels and accepted by most universities as an alternative qualification for entry to degree courses. **Grade 4 at GCSE is the minimum** entry requirement for Extended Diplomas, but Grade 5s are often expected.

BTECs are also available at Level 2 and 1 for students achieving Grades 1-3 at GCSE. Both of these BTECs are one-year courses.

A new Technical Level (T-Level) qualification is being introduced, also offered at FE Colleges.

Essentially, it is a hybrid academic/vocational/apprenticeship qualification available at Level 3 only. There is a strong exam element, mixed with practical learning and work placements giving an 80/20 mix between college and work. **Grade 5 at GCSE** appears to be the standard entry requirement. Currently (Sept 2020), it is only offered in a small number of vocations/industries and by a limited number of FE Colleges. More are scheduled for Sept 2021 entry.

For both **Vocational and Technical** courses, Sacred Heart students are fortunate to be close to West Herts College, which has an exceptionally wide range of courses available at Extended Diploma and lower levels, plus some T Levels

APPRENTICESHIP

This is the work-based pathway available after Year 11.

Apprenticeships are paid, formal training programmes linked to a trade or industry, providing a qualification recognised by all employers.

For Year 11s, they are available at Level 1 (*Traineeship*), Level 2 (*Apprenticeship*) and Level 3 (*Advanced Apprenticeship*) and have

GCSE grade requirements comparable to the equivalent Vocational courses.

As an apprentice the college/work mix is 20/80, so on average an Apprentice will spend 1 day a week at college and 4 days a week in the workplace.

Level 1 and 2 take 6-12 months to complete, the Level 3 18-24 months.

Most Apprentices (especially at Advanced level) are offered a full-time job by their company on completion of their training.

There are also Higher and Degree level Apprenticeships that require Level 3 qualifications (either A Levels, BTECs or T Level) and are available at 18 years plus, as an alternative to university.

The majority of vacancies can be found on the Government sponsored website <https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/>.

Other reliable sources are Rate My

Apprenticeship <https://www.ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk/> and Get My First

Job <https://www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk/>.