

1 INTRODUCTION

As a parent or carer you will want to help your child succeed. It may not always feel like it, but research shows that parents have a key influence on their child's career choices!

The Skills Show is the nation's largest skills and careers event and offers hands-on experiences that inspire young people to find out more about the world of work.

Through the Have a Go experiences, watching talented young people showcase their skills, hearing from real people doing real jobs and accessing specialist advice, young visitors have the opportunity to uncover a hidden talent or interest, broaden their horizons and perhaps discover a new career. Whatever they decide to do they will need lots of support. This guide aims to ensure you have information at your fingertips about some of the key elements, including:

- The main options and qualifications.
- Apprenticeship and Traineeship as a route to success.
- The importance of skills and qualifications.
- How jobs are changing.

Talking to your child about any new ideas they have following a visit to The Skills Show will be a great start!



2 THE IMPORTANCE OF SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS

Between the ages of 14 and 18 your child will be starting on an important career journey. It will be very useful for them to explore a range of different learning and work options to construct a future that makes the most of their strengths and interests. Their active involvement in this process is crucial so that they are happy with the decisions they make.

Skills and qualifications are going to be very important for your child's future. Demand for low skilled workers continues to decrease and the qualification level required to get a job is set to rise between now and 2020. Most jobs will require qualifications at a minimum of level 2/3 in the future. Qualifications and skills are an important foundation for future success.

Encourage and support your child to research the careers they are considering thoroughly and the likely future trends. There is a wide range of printed and online material available to help

them do this. Check out some of the websites we suggest in the useful sources of information section and encourage them to seek expert and impartial advice and guidance.

Careers advisers are located within each of the 4 Hubs at The Skills Show. Speak with them about which is the most appropriate career path for your young person. Alongside them there are Your Next Step boards listing current vacancies in Apprenticeships, Traineeships, college courses, work experience, volunteering opportunities and jobs.



3 POST-16 QUALIFICATIONS

The law now requires that all young people continue in some kind of education or training until the age of 18. So what are your child's options after year 11? They can attend school or college and study A levels or one of a range of work-related qualifications. Alternatively they could do an Apprenticeship, or start a job or voluntary work with training.

School and college prospectuses set out details of the qualifications they offer. Have a look at these with your child so that you understand the entry requirements, the size of the qualification, how students will learn, and where the qualifications can lead. Full-time qualifications at school and college are classified as follows:-

Academic qualifications – allow young people to study more than one subject in depth. They include GCSEs and A levels and the International Baccalaureate. A levels are going through changes



and as of September 2015, exams take place at the end of two years' study. AS levels are still offered, but they are one year, stand-alone qualifications, rather than progressing to A2 as in the past.

Technical level qualifications – provide preparation for particular occupations, for example engineering, hospitality, computing or accountancy. They have been developed along with employers and are assessed and graded at distinction, merit or pass.

Applied general qualifications – offer the opportunity for applied learning within a broad vocational area such as sport, science or business rather than preparation for a single occupation.

4 APPRENTICESHIPS AND TRAINEESHIPS

Apprenticeships are available to anyone over the age of 16 who has clear career ideas and wants to start a job with structured training. They provide the opportunity to work for an employer, earn a wage and gain qualifications alongside workplace skills. Apprenticeships are available in over 170 industries and cover over 1,500 different job roles. They take between one and five years to complete and are respected by employers. They are available at different levels:

Traineeships – include work preparation, work experience, maths and English study and prepare young people for Apprenticeships.

Intermediate Apprenticeships – usually require GCSEs at grade D or above.

Advanced Apprenticeships – usually require four GCSEs at grade A*-C or the equivalent.

Go to www.gov.uk and search for *Find an Apprenticeship* or *Find a Traineeship*. There are 27,000 vacancies available right now. People at The Skills Show can help and give further information about this route.



8 USEFUL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

<https://www.pinterest.com/ofqual/postcards/> – information for parents about the changes to qualifications.

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/> – general information about learning, jobs, applications for all people in England. There is information on more than 130 industries with 800 different jobs. There is a special section for 13-19 year olds and a helpline available from 8am until 10pm seven days a week – 0800 100 900.

<http://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/> – everything you need to know about Apprenticeships and Traineeships including a vacancy matching service. You can register and search for opportunities based on your postcode, job title or sector.

<http://wwwucas.com> – comprehensive information and advice about higher education, including information about university courses throughout the UK, how to choose courses and how to apply.

<http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/students/> – a straight talking introduction to financing higher education.

<https://www.gov.uk/student-finance> – information about student loans and grants, including application forms.

<http://www.parentadviser.co.uk/> – information and advice for parents about how to support your child with higher education choices.

<http://www.careersadviceforparents.org/p/free-expert-advice.html> – a website for parents supporting their child with career choices.

<https://www.plotr.co.uk/> – provides games, insider knowledge and inspirational stories to support career exploration and choice. Check out the parents' zone.

<http://www.thecdi.net/> – The Career Development Institute is the professional body for career development in the UK. In addition to promoting good practice and quality, it maintains the Register of Career Development Professionals.

5 HIGHER LEVEL QUALIFICATIONS

There is a wide range of higher level qualifications open to young people who have level 3 qualifications (see section 6), including over 37,000 different degree courses. There are also foundation year courses if your child does not meet the requirements for direct entry to a degree. The UCAS website (www.ucas.com) provides comprehensive information about higher education courses and centres.

Higher Level and Degree Apprenticeships – are available to young people who are 18 with a level 3 qualification. They provide a new route to the professions allowing young people to gain high level skills and qualifications at levels 4 to 7. They provide access to jobs that only graduates could do in the past. Higher Apprentices can do a foundation degree (level 4) and possibly a BSc/BA/BEng (level 6) or even an MSc/MAMEng (level 7), depending on their employer. If your child is considering higher education this could provide an excellent route as, alongside their qualification,



they would get on-the-job training and gain skills needed for the industry. Higher Level Apprentices get paid at the same time. Costs for the qualification vary but will often be covered by a combination of the employer and government.

Around 75 Higher and Degree Apprenticeships are now available. They offer a positive option as major companies including Nestle, IBM, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, BT, Jaguar Land Rover and KPMG become involved.

6 PATHWAYS AND LEVELS OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Whatever your child chooses to do in life, there is likely to be a qualification and a pathway to help them do it. In many cases there may be a choice of pathways to the same career. Encourage them to look at the options available and choose the one that will help them succeed. The table provides an overview of options at different levels. It is important to remember that qualifications at the same level have similar demands and degrees of difficulty.

LEVEL	ACADEMIC	GENERAL VOCATIONAL	TECHNICAL LEVEL	APPRENTICESHIPS
Levels 4-6	Degrees, Foundation degrees	Higher National Diplomas	Professional/ Management qualifications	Higher and Degree Apprenticeship
Level 3 (advanced)	International Baccalaureate A Level and AS Level (Entry = 5/6 GCSEs A*-C minimum)	BTEC Level 3 National OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical (Entry = 4 GCSEs A*-C or Level 2 qualification)	Level 3 NVQs and Vocational Awards (Entry = 4 GCSEs A*-C or Level 2 qualification)	Advanced Apprenticeship (Entry = 4 GCSEs A*-C or Level 2 qualification + interview)
Level 2 (intermediate)	GCSEs A*-C	BTEC Level 2 (Entry = 4 GCSEs D+ and a school report or Level 1 qualification)	Level 2 NVQ City and Guilds Level 2 Certificate and Vocational Awards (Entry = less than 4 GCSEs A*-C or Level 1 qualification or assessment)	Intermediate Apprenticeship (Entry = GCSEs at D+ or Level 1 qualification + interview)
Level 1 (foundation)	GCSEs D-G	BTEC Level 1 Cambridge Nationals (Entry = interview or assessment)	Level 1 NVQs and Vocational Awards (Entry = interview or assessment)	Traineeship or Pre-Apprenticeship (Entry = interview or assessment)

7 FUTURE JOBS

Technology is reshaping the work place and how we work and interact. There has, for example, been a decrease in the demand for routine professional skills such as drafting contracts and accounting. On the other hand, we see a growth of jobs in the social care and health sectors as a result of the ageing population. It is impossible to predict future trends with complete accuracy but there is value in considering which skills will be in greatest demand in the future. For instance, 52% of companies in the UK report that there are critical shortages of people with skills and qualifications in science, technology, engineering and maths.

The Skills Show provides a brilliant opportunity to explore new and emerging jobs and consider those skills that will help your children thrive. Here are some examples of jobs that have appeared over the last decade linked to technological developments and advances:-

Digital architect – design a selection of virtual buildings for advertisers and retailers to market their products.

Cybercrime analyst – use data and digital forensic skills to investigate computer based crime, including hacking, online scams and fraud, and terrorist communication.

Mechatronics engineer – build, maintain, repair and programme equipment control systems within the automotive industry.

Social media strategist – use social media to help companies to interact with customers, build brand awareness and loyalty, and track data.

Programmer and data analyst – work in the retail sector to support internet sales and distribution.

Sustainable energy engineer – one of the growing numbers of jobs associated with using dwindling resources in a sustainable way and deploying renewable energy.

Visit the Future Skills area at The Skills Show in Hall 18, to Have a Go at some jobs of the future.

