



Our Ref: TAC/careers/nextstepsY11

October 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

Oldbury Wells Careers – Year 11 Planning for Next Steps

As you are aware Year 11 is an important year for pupils as they navigate their progress towards GCSE exams and beyond. Through our personal development/ enrichment programme we will assist pupils in exploring and selecting their post-16 pathways. This will include a post-16 evening on **8th October 2026** and a programme of talks and visits from local post-16 providers.

We offer students personal guidance through our Careers Advisor, Mel Lawrence mel.lawrence@oldburywells.com and all students also have access to the Unifrog careers platform which has relevant, up-to-date information on a range of career pathways.

Below is a guide on how pupils can be proactive in their post-16 decisions.

What can you do to make the right choice?

Find out about different careers that interest you through websites including, unifrog.org, Prospects.ac.uk, <https://icould.com>

Get advice from the people you know you, like parents and teachers and from your Careers Advisor, Mel Lawrence.

Look at the qualifications on offer to you at local 6th Forms and Colleges. You could start by visiting one of the post-16 options events in either Shrewsbury or Telford in September. You could also visit the open day events at the local colleges, ideally in the Autumn term.

You could consider whether an apprenticeship might be a good route for you. (See apprenticeship information below).

For either BTEC, T level or A level choices, ensure that they are subjects that:

- you will enjoy
- you think that you will do well in
- will help you get to where you want to go in the future.

You can have a few ideas of things you would like to apply for. Just before Christmas this year may be a good time to start making some applications.

A Levels

A Levels are subject-based qualifications which can be studied as part of a three A Level programme or a mixed A Level/Vocational programme. See examples of a range of courses and entry requirements here:

- <https://www.scg.ac.uk/courses/a-levels>
- <https://telfordcollege.ac.uk/course/?ucterms=ems-study-area~college;ems-subject-area~a-level>

If thinking about studying A Levels, there are some really useful articles under the advice section such as which A levels you should take to study particular degrees, how to choose your A Levels and making the jump from GCSEs etc. This information is also available on the Unifrog platform.

- www.which.co.uk/alevelchoices
- www.which.co.uk/alevelexplorer

Vocational Qualifications (T Levels, BTECS)

BTECS

If you are thinking about vocational qualifications, then research the pros and con.

- www.which.co.uk/btecs

If you want to go to University then you could start researching courses that might accept BTECs.

- www.which.co.uk/courses

Or check out the entry requirements on the UCAS website www.ucas.com.

See an example of a range of BTEC courses here:

- <https://www.scg.ac.uk/our-courses/vocational>
- <https://telfordcollege.ac.uk/course/?ucterms=ems-study-area~college>
- <https://hlnc.ac.uk/colleges/walford-college/courses/>

T Levels

A T Level is a full-time programme equivalent to 3 A Levels. T Levels are ideal if you wish to continue your studies in a more practical way. They are good for those students who know what industry they want to go into as they help you to build knowledge and work experience.

You will spend 20% of the time on work experience and 80% of the time in the classroom. They are like an apprenticeship, although you won't get paid.

They give you the chance to continue your studies and get a much broader idea of what it is like to work in a certain sector, with the opportunity to specialise later. Some students may be able to continue onto university, an apprenticeship, or straight into work. An example of T levels can be found here:

- <https://www.scg.ac.uk/courses/t-levels>

A link to which Universities are currently accepting T levels is below. For more detail on specific entry requirements for University courses please go to www.ucas.com.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-providers-with-t-levels-in-entry-requirements/list-of-higher-education-providers-that-accept-t-levels-for-entry>

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are paid, work-based training for those who know what job they would like to do. You will work 80% on-the-job and generally it's 20% in the classroom.

Finding an apprenticeship is like finding a job.

It is important that you apply for college as a back up, in case you are unsuccessful at getting an apprenticeship.

Many vacancies will ask for 4s in English and Maths and some 4s in other subjects so always make sure you have a back-up plan.

How to find live apprenticeship vacancies

- The 'Find an Apprenticeship' website below is the first place to look, register for an account and set up alerts:
<https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>
- NHS Jobs: <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/candidate> Shrewsbury and Telford
<https://www.jobs.sath.nhs.uk/find-job/apprenticeships>
- Public Sector: www.wmjobs.co.uk / [Current Vacancies – Shropshire Council](#)
- Engineering: <https://in-comm.co.uk/vacancies/>
- Indeed: <https://uk.indeed.com/>
- Rate my apprenticeship and Get my First Job: www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk
<https://www.ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk/>

The Job Centre plus family contacts, friends and careers events are useful too.

The Telford Apprenticeship show tends to be in March and is a great place to talk to local employers and apprentices.

Register to be told of apprenticeship vacancies at the local Colleges (on their websites) and relevant providers, as many have databases of companies seeking apprentices. Just because you register it doesn't mean that you have an apprenticeship, they will just forward vacancies. You will then go through a job interview process and there may be lots of others applying for the same vacancy.

A good time to apply is February/March of your leaving year, although some companies do recruit almost a year before so it can be wise to register on the National apprenticeship website from October onwards.

A good CV is especially important if you are looking into apprenticeships.

- <https://uk.indeed.com/career-advice/cvs-cover-letters/school-leaver-cv>
- <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/cvs-and-cover-letters/example-cvs/school-leaver-cv-example>
- <https://barclayslifeskills.com/i-want-help-applying-for-jobs/school/cv-builder/#/>
- <https://careerswales.gov.wales/getting-a-job/build-a-cv/school-leaver-cv-example>

Study Programmes or Traineeships

If you feel you're not quite ready to go straight into an apprenticeship, need to develop your literacy and numeracy skills, or simply want to boost your employability, a study programme could be a great option.

Study programmes give you the opportunity to try different types of work through tasters and placements, helping you explore your interests and work out what you'd like to do in the future. They can also provide the support and skills you need to progress into further education, employment or an apprenticeship.

Information for study programmes at SBC, County Training, Juniper, Landau, Enable can be found in the open day events list on the OWS website [Careers](#) page.

We hope that you find this information useful in Post-16 conversations at home. We have out a list of open days for 2025/26 on the careers page of our website (link above).

If you feel your child needs further support at any time this year, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully



Terry Cowburn
Head of Year 11
Careers and Guidance Lead

Terry.cowburn@oldburywells.com