

2026 Leavers Pathways Guide

Route 1 – Mixed Pathway

Choose up to 3 different *part-time* level 3 courses you will enjoy. These will make up a full-time programme. These can be subjects you have learned in school or new subjects that you have researched. You can choose courses that are more academic and exam based, or courses that are more practical and coursework based. At many colleges you can mix these course types to make a timetable that suits your preferred learning style. *Courses include the likes of English, Maths, Science, Geography, Psychology, Law, Music and many more.*

Some colleges and sixth forms* to search for and explore

Worthing College | Chichester College | Varndean College | BHASVIC | Collyer's | Oscar Romero* | Angmering 6th Form* | St Philip Howard* | SRWA* | Littlehampton Academy*

Some course type examples

A-Level | AAQ | BTEC | CAMTEC | Applied | Certificate

Entry requirements

Aim for 5 or more GCSEs at grade 4+ to include English & Maths. Some courses may need higher grades. If your final grades fall below these and you want a mixed pathway, you can often start on a level 2 programme.

Don't automatically choose A-levels – They are not always better especially if the academic exam-based learning style does not suit you. If you have enjoyed the GCSE learning style, then A-levels may be a fine choice.

Route 2 – Focussed Pathway (industry specific)

Choose a single full-time area of learning you will enjoy. This will likely be connected to an industry or work area that you might like to progress onto. All these courses are more practical and focus more on coursework. Some still have exams. *Areas include Beauty Therapy, Mechanics, Engineering, Construction, Theatre, Gardening, Hair Styling, Animal Care and many more.*

Some colleges to search for and explore

Northbrook | GB Met Brighton | Chichester College | Plumpton College | Brinsbury College | BIMM DV8 Brighton | BN1 Arts | Worthing College

Some course type examples

T-level | City & Guilds | Certificate | Diploma

Entry requirements

Aim for 4 or more GCSEs at grade 4+ to include English & Maths to access level 3 courses. Many colleges offer level 1 and level 2 options which will allow you to start in your chosen area and progress if you have lower grades. This will mean that your overall study is longer so aim for the best grades you can. The requirement for these courses will include good school attendance, enthusiasm and a commitment to learn.

Route 3 – Apprenticeship Pathway

An apprenticeship is a full-time job alongside structured learning with a college or training provider. If you want an apprenticeship, you should first plan and apply to a mixed or focussed pathway before January of Year 11. This will act as a backup plan if you are not able to secure a job offer. Once you have applied to route 1 or route 2 you can apply to apprenticeship positions. We recommend that you apply to more than one and that you engage with the careers department in school so that they can support you. If you are successful and receive an offer of employment, you will not need to use your backup route.

Important note: You usually apply to apprenticeships through the Government website or sometimes with an employer directly. You can't apply to apprenticeships via colleges or training providers though they can sometimes help. **This route will require a lot of work and determination from you to secure.**

Some websites to search for and explore

GOV Find an apprenticeship | Amazing Apprenticeships | Indeed Apprenticeships West Sussex

Entry requirements

Many jobs will ask for GCSE grade 4 in English & Maths. If you secure these now you will have a lot more opportunities open to you. Some apprenticeships are available to those without these grades but your options will be more limited. Job adverts will make the job requirements very clear.

Foundation and SEND Pathways

If you've met challenges in education, cannot sit your GCSE's or receive very low grades then you might choose a supported programme which acts as a foundation year. You can settle in, gain confidence and learn skills. Most foundation courses give you a chance to try other courses to progress onto.

Some colleges to search for and explore

Northbrook | Chichester | Plumpton | Brinsbury

Some course examples

Future You | Inclusion | Foundation | Gateway

What you need to do now

THINK	What do you want Year 12 to be like? Where do you want it to lead?
EXPLORE	Know your options – Explore the routes, courses and colleges above
PLAN	Map out your ideas – Where do you want to visit and what do you need to find out?
APPLY	In November, usually after you have visited the colleges you're interested in.

**AT ANY STAGE VISIT CAREERS OR SEND AN EMAIL TO TALK IT THROUGH, GET SUPPORT
AND HAVE ALL YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED**

Use **Xello** to research future job ideas – E-mail careers@durring.com