

YEAR 11 OPTIONS

Advice and Guidance on
making the right choice

*LISKEARD SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE
CAREERS DEPARTMENT*

Contents

	Page
Forward	2
Raising the Participation Age	3
What are my choices?	4
Labour Market information	5
Qualifications and choices – getting it right	7
What and where to study?	12
What help will I get in school?	14
Questions and answers	15

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Forward

Congratulations! You have made it successfully through the first four years at Liskeard School and are now progressing well through year 11. This year will go by very quickly and now is the time to start thinking about the next stage of your education, which should lead you all the way to your chosen career.

You probably feel that you have enough on your mind what with studying, taking exams and dealing with everyday life – now someone is asking you to make big career decisions about the rest of your life.

Don't panic. There is lots of help, advice and guidance available to you to help you through the process.

Don't forget.....

Education and training are vital to your future success

The number of jobs for poorly qualified, unskilled people is shrinking quickly. You need skills, knowledge and qualifications if you want to get on in life.....and that means continuing your education or training

Continuing your education does not mean that you have to stay on at school

Whatever you achieve in school, there is a post-16 option to suit you. Staying on at school is one option but you could also consider your training or education at college, with a training provider, apprenticeship or in the workplace

You may be eligible for financial help post-16

There are bursaries available from all establishments if qualifying criteria is met. There may also be help with transportation costs

You need good careers information and advice to help you choose well

Make the most of the help that is on offer – in careers lessons, from family and friends, subject teachers and the Careers Co-ordinator

Involve your parents and carers

Your parents and carers want what is best for you but things have changed a lot since they were at school. Help them to understand what you are doing and how they can help you. (Let them have a look at the Parents and Carers Webpage on the Careers area)

Raising the Participation Age

Your future is changing....what does this mean?

Raising the Participation Age (RPA) is the Government's policy which sets out a new requirement for young people to continue in learning or training after the age of 16. This will affect:

- young people that complete Year 11 in or after 2015: it will be a requirement to remain in learning or training up to 18 years old.

RPA does not necessarily mean staying in school; young people have a choice about how they continue in learning and training.

Why?

By staying in learning and training you can gain the qualifications and skills you need to help you to succeed. Advantages include:

- Making it easier to find and stay in a job
- Having the ability to earn and give you a greater choice of career path
- Being able to compete in the future local job market
- Providing pathways to opportunities where you can develop your qualifications and skills further in order to support your future career aspirations for example: higher education (university), higher apprenticeships, setting up your own business.

You will also have a greater chance to develop the knowledge and practical skills that employers are looking for. This means you will find it easier to get a better job, with better pay and career prospects.

What are my choices?

Having the right skills, qualifications and knowledge improves your job prospects and boosts your future earning power. There are different post-16 options that you can do to enable you to gain these.

Staying on at school is one option but you could also consider college, training, apprenticeships or the workplace.

It is important that you choose something that suits your interests and abilities. Think about what motivates you? What do you think will give you the best chance of success?

CASE STUDY 1

Keeping your options open – Sally is in year 11 and has recently made her post-16 option choices. She does not have a future career in mind at the moment but enjoys the idea of travel and tourism and possibly design. Sally's main priority was to keep her ideas open.

She plans to stay on at school to study a range of A level subjects. She has chosen Art because she enjoys it and it will enable her to pursue her interests. She has opted for Psychology because she is interested in other people and it will be useful in many careers. She chose Maths because all employers value Maths and Chemistry because it is her favourite subject.

Sally is thinking of progressing onto University after her A levels and knows that her choices will enable her to access many different subject areas, once she decides which career path to take.

Labour Market Information

Knowledge, skills and qualifications are increasingly important in today's workplace. How will you know if you are getting the right ones?

Labour Market information

The labour market is the place where workers compete for jobs and employers compete for workers. Experts look at what is happening now both locally, nationally and globally and try to determine what trends will happen in the future. This information is known as labour market information (LMI).

Long term trends

Economic trends around the world have put pressure on the labour market. There is more unemployment, part-time working and uncertainty as a result and labour market information suggests that this will change very little in the long-term trends. So when you are deciding what you want to do next, you will need to think about these trends. They show:

- There are very few 'jobs for life' positions anymore – you may have to change jobs many times in your working life
- New jobs are coming in all the time because of technologies, economic, social and political changes
- All industries will recruit some new workers to replace those who retire, change jobs or swap careers
- The number of jobs for unskilled, poorly qualified people will continue to fall
- The number of jobs for skilled, well-qualified people will continue to grow
- The number of jobs using science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM) and modern foreign language skills will continue to grow
- The workplace is an ever changing environment so employers will continue to need people who are willing, able to learn and show adaptability

You can use LMI to see if your career plans and ideas are realistic. You can also check that you are aiming for the qualifications that will give you the knowledge and skills needed in today's workplace.

Check that:

- It has a long-term future? If there is a chance that it will disappear in the next few years, are you able to change your plans or direction?
- You will have what are employers looking for
- You know where the jobs are – so when you are ready you will know where to look for work

CASE STUDY 2

Steve is in his first year at college and aims to be a Studio Photographer when he leaves. With his interest in taking family and wedding photos, he opted to take a GCSE in Photography and then continued with the subject at A Level. Whilst planning for his post-16 options, Steve sought advice on the best entry routes into his chosen career and also spoke to existing professional photographers.

'I realised that getting a job as a professional Studio Photographer could be difficult so will keep investigating an Apprenticeship when I leave college as this is my preferred option. I have also kept my options open by doing A levels, so that I could look at other pathways such as university. I chose courses that would make use of practical tasks in assignments, which is how I learn best'.

Steve chose A levels in Media Studies, English Language and Photography, so that he could also pursue a possible career in magazine editing.

There are different routes into many careers so it is important to research the options and choose a course that suits you best

Qualifications and choices – getting it right

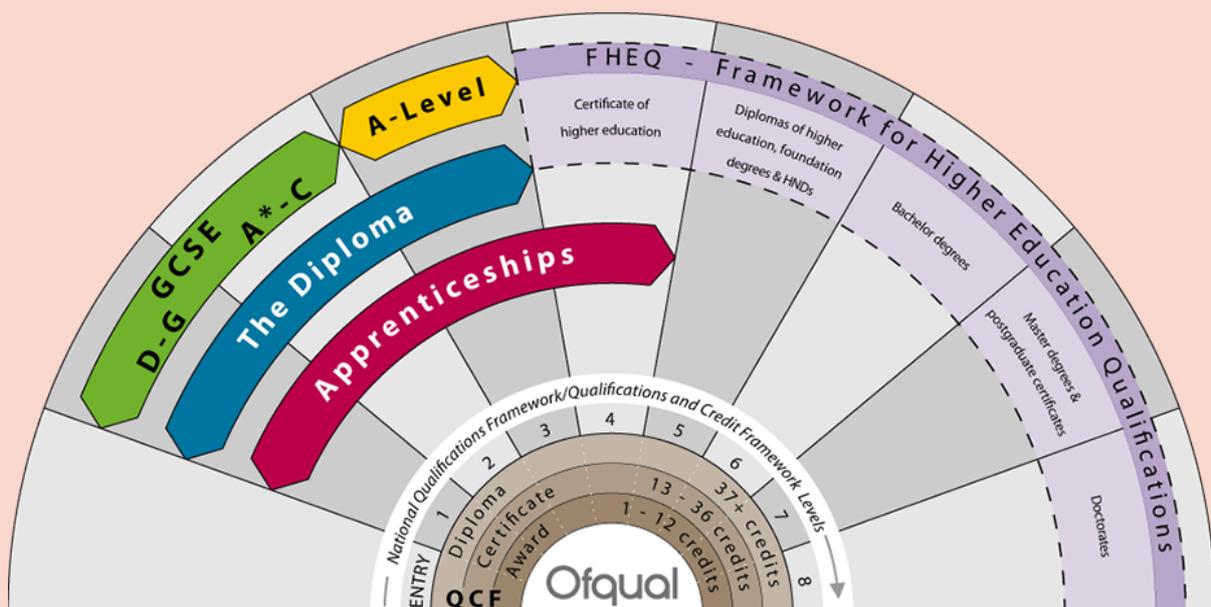
Qualifications are your passport to more opportunities in education, training and work. Do you understand qualification levels? Do you know how qualifications can help you in the future?

Qualification levels

Whatever you want to do in life, there is a qualification out there to help you do it. The important thing for you to do is choose the right ones and the right time. There are nine qualification levels – Entry level is at the bottom and level 8 is at the top. The level tells you how hard the qualification is – the higher you go, the harder the qualification!

Most employers ask first-time job applicants for level 2 qualifications, for example GCSE grades A*-C but they increasingly want you to have level 3 qualifications.

You need level 3 qualifications to access most university courses. You generally need a grade C or above in GCSE English and Maths too. To find out more about qualification levels see the diagram below.



How qualifications can help you in the future

There are six good reasons why you should take qualifications seriously.

1. To give you a good choice of jobs
2. To make sure you do not spend your life in a dead end job
3. To improve your earning power
4. To show other people what you can do
5. To prove to other people that you can learn
6. To show yourself what you can do

Explore your interests

Choose one career or job that interests you:

Subjects and qualifications needed:

Now use the chart on page 6 to match the qualifications you need to their level.

Entry Level/Level 1

Level 2

Level 3

Level 4-8

Post 16 options can offer different qualification opportunities and a mix of teaching methods and assessment. When you are thinking of which course will be right for you, you may need to take different influences into consideration before making your final decisions. Some options may include doing one-year courses which will mean that you will have to make another decision in a year's time.

Check that:

- Employers and universities value the options you are about to choose – if you intend to go on to higher education, check that your courses are suitable for you to get on to your preferred courses www.ucas.com
- Consider how well your preferred option compares with other options i.e. A levels or doing an Apprenticeship – your careers Co-ordinator will be able to help you.

Foundation Learning

Do you need some more time to build up your confidence and gain qualifications to move onwards and upwards?

Most people who choose this route will do a mix of English, Mathematics and ICT; it will also include personal and social development. You will also be required to undertake some form of work experience.

A Levels

Would you like to look at some of your GCSE subjects in more depth? Do you want to study more than one subject? If so, this option could suit you.

Being able to access A Levels (Advanced General Certificates of Education) will depend on your GCSE results. Most courses ask for the equivalent of five GCSE's at grade C or above and each school or college will have a list of the subjects they have on offer.

If you have a specific higher education course or career in mind you will need to check entry requirements as some require specific subjects and grades.

CASE STUDY 3

Jen is in year 12 and studying A levels at her school Sixth Form. She chose ICT, Business Studies, Maths and English. Jen remembers that when she first started her A levels she was very unsure whether she wanted to continue as she found them very different to her GCSE's and had not realised how much extra work they would entail.

Jen decided that she had to reassess how she learned, taking into consideration the fact that she would have to work a lot harder because of the greater depths of the subjects and that the courses demanded a lot more of her time and were structured differently to her GCSEs. Jen is now happy with her progress and pleased that she chose the subjects she did, even though she was a bit shocked to start with.

Her advice to year 11 students is to research fully the courses you intend to take, especially the course outlines. Speak to students that are already doing the course so that you do not have a complete shock in the first few months.

Vocational Qualifications

These are work-related qualifications. Examples are BTECs, City & Guilds, and OCR Nationals. These qualifications come in Awards, which is the smallest, a Certificate and the largest is a Diploma. Vocational qualifications are available in many different levels but most people aged 16-19 study from Entry level to level 3.

Entry requirements depend on where you study, the subject and level of your qualification. To do a level 3 course you will need 4 or 5 good GCSEs or a level 2 vocational qualification. To do a level 2 you will need four or five GCSEs at

grades D to G or a level 1 vocational qualification. Different providers will offer different subjects and levels ranging from construction to hair and beauty to engineering, floristry to plumbing and all in between.

The majority of courses take between one or two years to complete and have a mix of practical and theoretical both in the classroom and out on work experience.

Apprenticeships

Do you fancy earning whilst you learn? Then this could be the option for you. You can gain nationally recognised qualifications, skills and knowledge working in a specific employment area. There are three levels of apprenticeship – Apprenticeship, Advanced Apprenticeship and Higher Apprenticeship. Entry requirements can vary considerably for this option depending on the subject and level to be studied. For more information go to www.apprenticeships.org.uk

There are no set times for completing apprenticeships but the majority take between one and four years depending on the level taken and your learning ability. You will usually work with an employer for the main part of the week and attend college or specialist training facility on a day release basis. During your apprenticeship you will study for work based qualifications at level 2, 3 or 4, and a technical certificate in your chosen occupation. You will receive a salary and the same benefits as the other employees e.g. holiday pay and pension contributions. The minimum wage for an apprentice is £2.65 per hour (£2.73 from 1 Oct 2011) but many earn more than this.

CASE STUDY 4

Thinking back now, I did not know what I wanted to do at 16 and thought I'd look into an Apprenticeship after my Careers Co-ordinator mentioned them. I found that I could begin my career, learning from people who were experts in their field. I could get involved in real work straight from the off whilst doing my favourite subjects like Physics and Maths. I started my Engineering Apprenticeship on the minimum wage but now that I have started my Advanced Apprenticeship with the same company, my wages have risen to £185 per week.

I also really enjoy my college days and regularly deliver speeches on the benefits of Apprenticeships.

Your choice on what and where to study

Choosing the right place to learn can make all the difference to your success. It is important that you take advantage of Open Events and Taster Sessions from all the providers that you are interested in. Once you have visited them all, you can make an informed choice rather than leaving it to chance.

Different people will have different priorities as to why they want to study certain subjects and in which places, it is really important that you do not just follow the crowd.

What are your priorities?

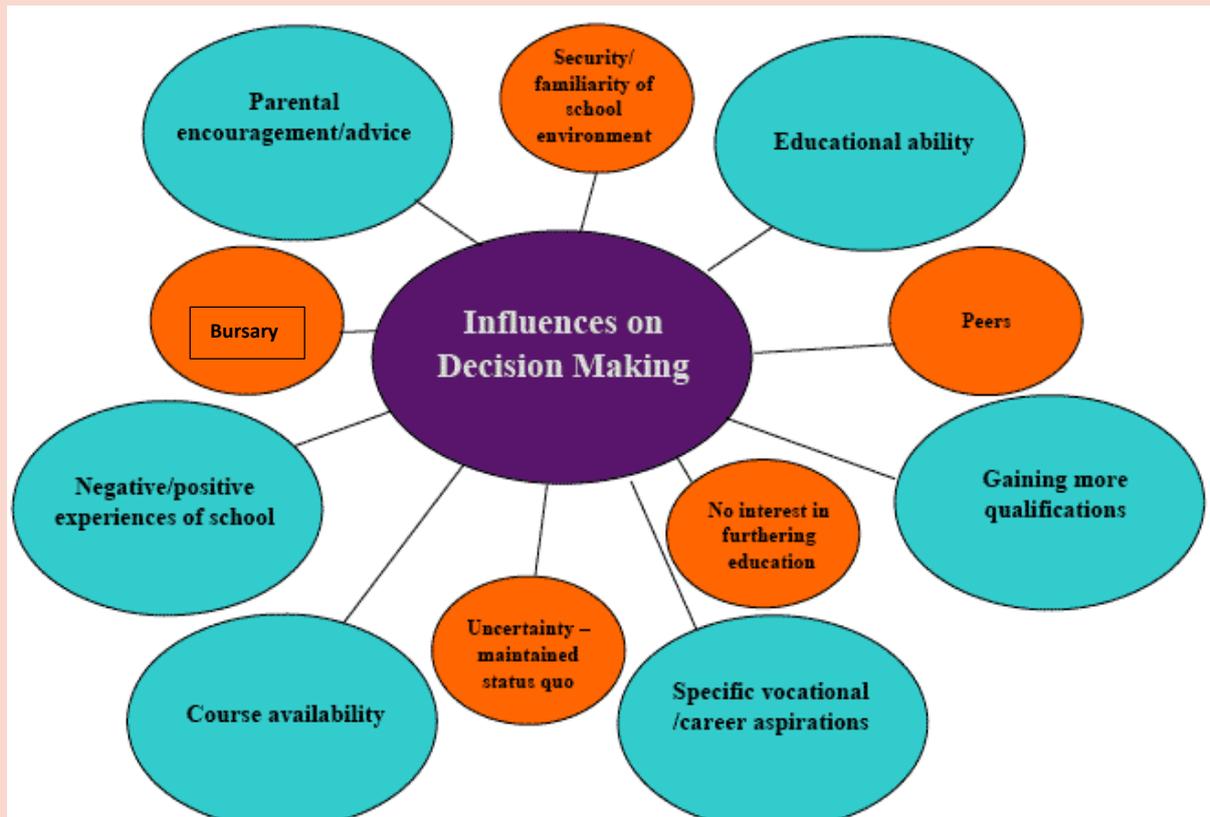
Which things are important to you when making your choice?

- Being with friends
- Being with people my own age
- Knowing some of the staff and students
- Staff know me and are able to get the best out of me
- Being at a place with a good reputation
- A friendly atmosphere
- Good social facilities
- Good sports facilities
- Being able to continue studying the subjects I like
- Being able to take a mix of qualifications
- Being able to study new subjects
- Being able to carry on my studies to degree level
- Having a job and wage from the start

Now really is the time for you to make your own choices, rather than be influenced by other people. Yes it is right to listen to advice and get as much information about a subject as you possibly can but ultimately it will be your choice.

It is always a good idea to have a 'plan B' just in case something happens that will change your route, for example, you get better or worse results than predicted.

Look at the diagram below to ensure you have thought things through thoroughly.



Hot tip

Whatever you have achieved in school, there is post-16 option to suit you

What help will I get in school?

During the autumn term you will have a careers presentation on 'Your choices at 16+' which will hopefully start you thinking about your options, if you have not already done so. At the start of the year, each tutor group have been given a poster highlighting all the local college open events, it is advised that you visit at least two of these events to ensure that you make the right choice.

Throughout the year we will invite Liskeard Sixth Form, education providers, employers, training providers and apprenticeship leaders into assemblies to take you through the different options in more detail. We will also hold 'drop in' sessions so you can speak to education and training experts who will give you impartial advice.

In the autumn term you will be asked to complete a Careers Action Plan so that we are able to see if you have started to think about the process and how much support you are likely to need throughout the coming year. It will give you action points and ask whether you would like to see the Careers Co-ordinator for a one to one meeting as a matter of urgency. We will talk through your ideas and plans, FE choices and possible career routes. If you receive additional support within school, you will be invited to attend a meeting with your Careers Southwest Personal Adviser who will help you through the transition process and ensure you receive the support you require at your chosen 16+ establishment.

Remember that you are not on your own; we are here to help you through the process.

At the start of the New Year, you will be invited to attend a sixth form interview with one of the management team to discuss continuing your education at Liskeard School and your future options. At the end of January/early February you will be asked to complete a county run '16+ Options Application Form' - All students must do this. This form will be your application to further education establishments within Cornwall. We will send these off to all of your choices on your behalf. Shortly afterwards you will be invited for interview and advised whether you have been successful, subject to examination results. If you intend to study outside of county, you will also need to complete additional application forms for these establishments.

Throughout the spring and summer term in school, Mrs Carlin, the school's Careers Co-ordinator will invite all students to attend a one to one interview to discuss their options, ways forward and career progression routes. There will be follow-up meetings where necessary and each student will be advised that they can make further appointments at any time. We ensure that all students have a post 16 destination before they leave the school.

Questions and Answers

Q I don't know what I want to do at the end of year 11

A Speak to Mrs Carlin, your tutor, head of year and teachers – they will be able to give you some advice. If you have no idea what career you would like to follow, log on to the National Careers Service website and complete the 'Health Skills Check'. At the end of this series of questions you will be given some ideas on careers that match your answers, you can then do further research on this area.

Q My friends are all staying on at Liskeard School but I am not sure that this is what I want to do

A Make sure that you attend at least two open events so that you can judge for yourself whether you would like to try somewhere new or whether visiting other establishments has confirmed that you would like to continue your education at Liskeard School.

Q I am worried that my parents will not be able to afford transportation costs to my FE choice

A Most colleges now offer free transportation or bursaries if your parents have a joint income of less than £31,000 coming into the household. Liskeard School offer bursaries to students who meet the necessary criteria to help with transportation and course materials.

Q Can I attend more than one interview with Mrs Carlin, the Careers Co-ordinator?

A Yes of course. You are able to pop in at break or lunch time to make as many appointments as you need to help you through the process.

Q Can I go to university if I do not study A levels?

A Yes. There are many courses that are accepted for university study and even Access courses too. Although the obvious path is from A levels straight on to university entry, there are many different progression routes to reach the end goal – so, do not be put off if you do not get your 5 A*-C grades or think you do not want to study A levels.

Q What if I think I have made the wrong choice?

A If you decide that you have made the wrong choice in the first few weeks of September make sure that you speak to someone straight away – it is not too late at this point to change your mind be it provider or course.

Q My chosen college is over an hour away from my home, is this too far?

A My advice is to try out the journey a few times before making your decision. Many people have started courses away from Liskeard but returned during the first month due to travel issues, others find this is not a problem.

Q Can I go out to work?

A Yes. Your work must have training attached to it (280 hours per Year or 1 day a week).