



# Raising of the Participation Age

## Information for parents and carers

### What is the 'Raising of the Participation Age'?

It is Government policy that by 2013, all young people will be expected to stay in some form of learning until they are 17. This will increase to age 18 by 2015.

This means that those leaving Year 11 in 2013 will need to remain in learning until they are 17. Those leaving Year 11 from 2014 onwards will need to remain in learning until they are 18.

### Why is this needed?

The economy and the world of employment are changing. More and more jobs in the future will require a higher level of skills, training and qualifications. The changes to the participation age will help to prepare our young people for successful careers and equip the UK workforce for the demands of the 21st Century.



## Does this mean staying at school until the age of 18?

Not necessarily, although lots of young people will choose to stay on. Young people will be able to choose from one of the following options:

- Full-time education, such as school or college
- Work-based learning, such as an Apprenticeship
- Part-time education or training if they are employed, self employed or volunteering for more than 20 hours a week

They will have the choice of lots of different qualifications including A levels, more GCSEs, Apprenticeships and vocational courses.

## What does this mean for young people currently in years 9 and 10?

It means that they should start planning ahead now because they will be involved in learning until they are 17 or 18 and need to start looking at the whole range of options available to them from the age of 14.

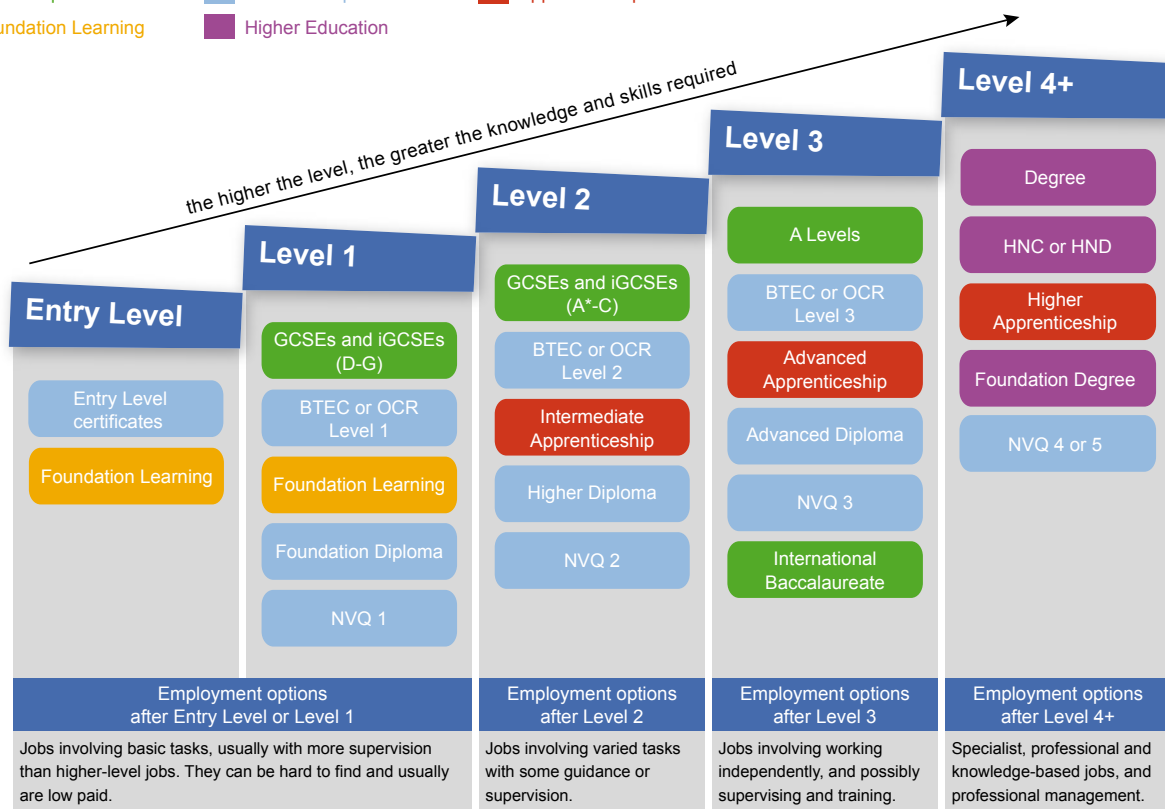
## How can I help my teenager?

Parents and carers can help by preparing their teenager for the changes and talking to them about the benefits of staying in learning after they are 16. Don't forget that the vast majority of young people choose to stay on in learning after Year 11 already, because they understand the importance of gaining further education and qualifications.

**To give you an idea of qualifications that are available at different levels take a look at the diagram below...**

## Learning Options @ 14-19

**Key:** ■ General qualifications ■ Vocational qualifications ■ Apprenticeships  
■ Foundation Learning ■ Higher Education





## Worried about the financial costs?

Currently families can still claim Child Benefit whilst their teenager is in full time post-16 education and some forms of training. Depending on your circumstances, you may also be eligible for additional benefits whilst your teenager is in post-16 learning.

Since September 2011, a new bursary scheme has been introduced to help 16-19 year olds in full time education or training who most need financial support. This includes support if your teenager is in care or is a care leaver, is claiming income support or is disabled and receiving Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance. Details about how the Bursary scheme operates in particular sixth forms and colleges can be obtained from the institutions themselves or can be found on **[www.helpyouchoose.org](http://www.helpyouchoose.org)**

For the latest information on **Child Benefit** go to **[www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)** or call the Child Benefit helpline on **08453 021 444**.

For information about the **16-19 bursary fund and other allowances** go to **[www.direct.gov.uk/moneytolearn](http://www.direct.gov.uk/moneytolearn)** or call the Learner Support helpline on **0800 121 8989**





# For more information about learning and training options...

**[www.helpyouchoose.org](http://www.helpyouchoose.org)**

Norfolk's careers information and advice website for 14-19 year olds

**[www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)**

for information about Apprenticeships

**[www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)**

visit the Education and Learning pages for more information about your teenagers choices in years 9 and 11

**<https://nextstep.direct.gov.uk>**

for job and careers information

