

OATHALL COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Work Related Learning



Post 16 Information Booklet

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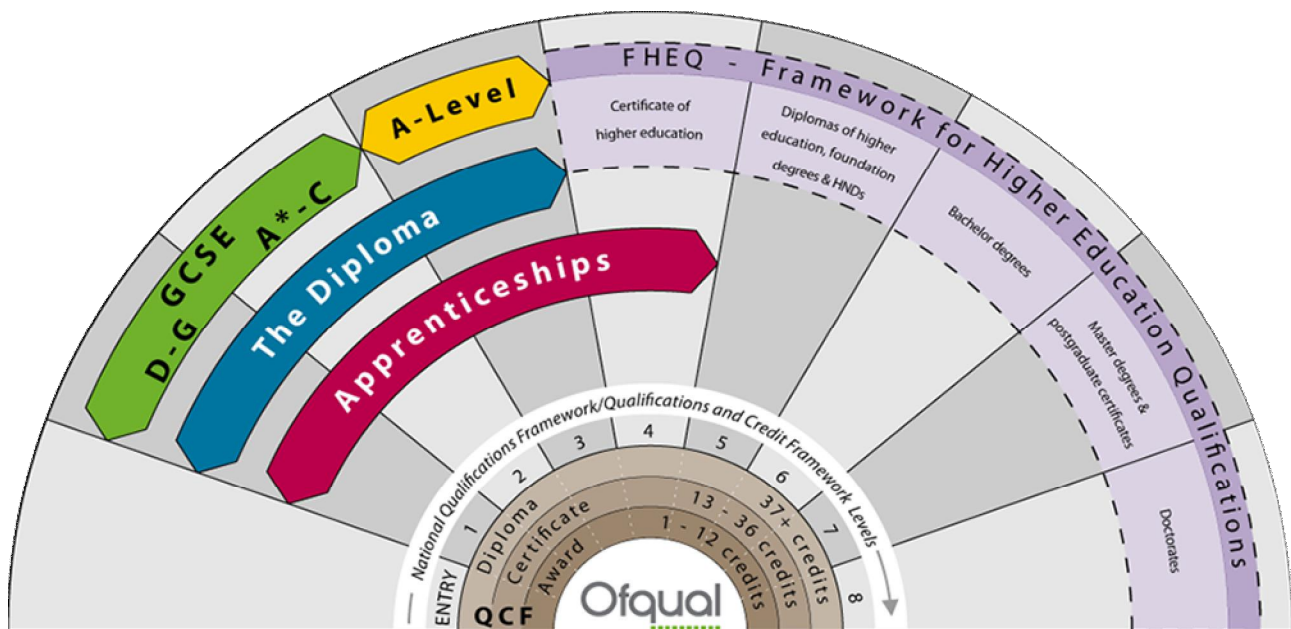
UNDERSTANDING QUALIFICATIONS

What level should you choose?

The level shows how demanding a qualification is . the higher the level, the more difficult the qualification. There are nine levels. Entry level is at the bottom and level 8 is at the top. Every level includes different types of qualifications. Some are subject based, e.g. AS/A levels. Some are vocational (work and job related), e.g. BTECs, NVQs, Apprenticeships.

Students work at the level that suits their abilities and experience in a particular subject. Once you have gained a qualification at one level, you can move up to the next level. When deciding what level to study after Year 11, you need to consider:

- your starting point . what level are you working at now?
- the end point . can you move on to higher level qualifications?
- job entry requirements . most jobs require level 2 qualifications and many ask for qualifications at level 3 and above.
- higher education entry requirements . most courses require level 3 qualifications and a grade C or above in GCSE English and mathematics.



QUALIFICATION LEVELS

OPTIONS AT 16+

THE FULL TIME EDUCATION PATH AT POST 16

The post 16 qualifications framework encourages young people to choose a broader curriculum. This means that there are now more options available in full time education than ever before.

- Single and Double Award Applied A levels
- Two step AS/A2 academic A levels
- Courses leading to other qualifications such as the International Baccalaureate, NVQs, BTECs, City and Guilds and RSA
- Entry level qualifications e.g. OCR and ASDAN
- Additional GCSEs or re-takes
- 14-19 Diplomas

APPLIED A LEVELS (Level 3 Qualification)

Applied A levels place emphasis on the practical application of skills, knowledge and understanding within a broad vocational area. They also provide a basis for further training, higher education or progression to appropriate employment.

- Applied A levels are available in work-related themes as Single or Double Awards.
- Subjects include: Engineering, Media Studies, Performing Arts, Leisure Studies, Art & Design, Business, ICT and Health & Social Care.
- The Double Award (12 units) is the equivalent of two A2 academic A levels. The Single Award (6 units) is the equivalent of one A2 academic A level.
- It may be possible to do a 3 unit award in some subjects which is equivalent to one AS academic A level.
- Much of the work is practical and assessment will be through a combination of internal and external tests, assignments and projects depending on the subject studied.
- Applied A levels are graded A-E (the same as academic AS and A2 levels) and score points which count towards university entrance
- Students can combine Applied A levels and academic A levels in order to study a broad mix of vocational and academic subjects e.g. you could take an Applied A level in Health & Social Care combined with an academic AS or A2 level in Biology or Human Biology.

ACADEMIC AS/A2 LEVELS (Level 3 Qualification)

Students in Year 12 take a one year course called Advanced Subsidiary (AS) level and move on to A2 level in Year 13. (There is the opportunity to re-sit GCSE English and Maths, if necessary.)

- These are mainly offered in the more traditional subjects, e.g. English, Chemistry, Biology, Physics, Maths, History, Languages, etc. However, newer subjects such as Philosophy, Economics and Psychology are also available.
- Students can take 3, 4 or 5 AS levels in Year 12.
- AS/A2 levels are formally examined but can contain an element of coursework.
- AS levels can stand alone or be continued at A2 level in Year 13.
- Usually only 3 or 4 AS levels are continued at A2 level.
- AS/A2 levels can be taken in conjunction with other courses.
- AS/A2 levels are graded A* - E and score points which count towards university entrance.

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB) (Level 3 Qualification)

The International Baccalaureate is a rigorous and challenging alternative to A levels. It is taught worldwide. It is internationally recognised and understood by universities and employers as an excellent preparation for further study and employment. The IB takes two years and is broadly equivalent to four A levels.

To gain this qualification you must:

- Study six subjects from the subject groups of language, second language, individuals and societies, mathematics and computer science, the arts, and experimental sciences.
- Complete an extended essay, having researched and investigated a topic of special interest.
- Follow a theory of knowledge course.
- Participate in creativity, action and service projects.

You need to be organised; have a strong interest in broad areas of study and activities and be able to cope with ongoing assessment as well as exams.

As with all qualifications, we advise you to check carefully with individual institutions for exact entry requirements, but generally at least 5 GCSEs are required at A*-B. (For some specialist degree courses such as medicine at top universities, A levels are preferred.)

EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION (EPQ) (Level 3 Qualification)

If you are aiming to study at a top university, you should seriously consider taking the Extended Project Qualification in your second year. Universities value the EPQ as a preparation for higher level study. It involves independently researching and writing a 6,000 word dissertation on a chosen topic that fits with your studies or one that is of personal interest.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Colleges require a minimum of 5/6 GCSEs at grades A*-C for a 4 AS level course (these must include English and Maths). To take certain subjects at AS level, e.g. Maths, Sciences, Languages, a student would be expected to gain at least a B grade at GCSE in that subject.

Not all courses are available in every college and students need to find out for themselves what each college has on offer.

In deciding which subjects to take, students must give careful thought as to what they want to do afterwards: some higher level courses or employment opportunities require particular subjects, studied at particular levels, e.g. to become a doctor you will need to study Chemistry at A level.

MOVING ON TO UNIVERSITY

It is important to note that if a student is thinking of going to university, most require that a student takes at least 2 subjects through to the full A2 level, and many require 3 full A2 levels. Some universities even require that a student has 3 subjects at full A2 level plus an additional AS level. This is the maximum requirement for any university course. There are also level 3 Vocational Courses, e.g. BTECs, which can lead to higher education. Research must also be carried out if students are considering taking professional courses, e.g. Medicine. Certain subjects should be studied at A level to enable entry onto these degree courses.

A new system of points scoring came into force for university entrance in 2002. The new system enables students a lot more flexibility in their choice and breadth of subjects without jeopardising their ability to make applications to universities of their choice.

Further information about university entrance requirements and courses can be obtained from the Careers Office at school, Further Education Colleges, or visit the excellent UCAS website at www.ucas.com.

BTEC QUALIFICATIONS (Levels 2 and 3)

BTEC Qualifications are specialist vocational qualifications valued by industry and higher education alike. They encourage and stimulate student achievement through innovative learning and assessment styles, by focusing on the applied knowledge and understanding of the specific sectors, e.g. Business, Construction, Health & Social Care, IT, Sport, Public Services, Performing Arts, Media.

- Available at levels 2 and 3 (*level 1 is now Foundation Learning*).
If you plan to move from level 2 to level 3, you need to ensure you have sufficient units to be able to progress on to the higher level.
- Designed to industry standards.
- There are three sizes of BTEC: Certificate, Extended Certificate and Diploma (Subsidiary Diploma and Extended Diploma).
- All units and the overall qualification will be awarded a mark of Pass, Merit or Distinction.
- A period of work experience or day release can be part of the course.

You will need to be able to work individually and as part of a team. During the course a portfolio is prepared as evidence. You need to have a commitment to and an interest in a specific area of work. Ideal for those students who prefer continual assessment and enjoy coursework.

THE DIPLOMA (Levels 1, 2 and 3)

The Diploma qualification combines classroom learning with practical hands-on experience, including the chance to spend at least ten days working with an employer. It is designed to help young people develop the knowledge and skills employers and universities want. It has compulsory and optional elements. Assessment includes written examinations and internal assessment. All diploma students complete a project to demonstrate the knowledge and skills they have gained.

Diplomas are available in 14 subject areas at selected schools and colleges: Business Administration & Finance, Construction, Creative & Media, Engineering, Environmental & Land based Studies, Hair & Beauty Studies, Hospitality, IT, Manufacturing & Product Design, Public Services, Retail Business, Society, Health & Development, Sport & Leisure, Travel & Tourism.

The Diploma is available at three levels:

- Foundation Diploma - a level 1 qualification, equivalent to five GCSEs D-G.
- Higher Diploma - a level 2 qualification equivalent to seven GCSEs A*-C.
- Advanced Diploma - a level 3 qualification equivalent to three and a half A levels. This level also has a Progression Diploma which is the equivalent of two A levels.

The diploma can be used as a stepping stone to higher education, training and employment.

PERSONALISED PROGRAMMES / FOUNDATION LEARNING

These are Entry level and level 1 programmes. These courses include three distinct components:

- Vocational knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Functional skills (English, maths, ICT).
- Personal and social development.

Foundation learning programmes are designed for students who have, for various reasons, had limited achievement at school. They are designed to promote progression as well as helping students to achieve nationally recognised qualifications at Entry level and level 1.

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

Functional Skills are practical skills in English, mathematics and ICT which allow individuals to work confidently, effectively and independently in life. They are available as free-standing qualifications and also feature within the four qualification routes for 14-19 year olds . GCSEs, Apprenticeships, Diplomas and Foundation Learning.

THE EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS AT POST 16 (WORK BASED LEARNING)

This option suits students who know what they want to do for a living. You can leave school and find employment with work based training, e.g. NVQs, Apprenticeships, Traineeships.

NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (NVQs) (Levels 1, 2 and 3)

- Level 2 equivalent to 4 GCSEs, level 3 equivalent to 2 A levels
- Practical, skills based courses usually taken once in a job in areas such as Hairdressing, Catering, Childcare, Administration and Motor Vehicle Engineering.
- Some colleges make it possible for students to work towards NVQs while based in full time education. Students should refer directly to college prospectuses for more information.
- You need to have a strong interest in a specific area of work, be self-motivated, able to work by yourself and also as part of a team.
- Assessment is through coursework.

APPRENTICESHIPS

Apprenticeships are available in a huge variety of occupational areas, e.g. Accountancy, Business Administration, Animal Care, Catering, Construction, Customer Service, Engineering, Hairdressing, Health & Social Care, Horse Industry, IT, Motor Industry, Retail, Telecommunications and many more.

Apprenticeship (Level 2)

- Entry requirements vary. Some require specific qualifications such as GCSE in Maths and English at Grade C or above. Others require you to pass an initial assessment.
- Trainees will be paid a training wage and work towards qualifications in NVQs, Functional Skills and Technical Certificates.
- Usually takes one year to gain a level 2 (equivalent to 5 GCSEs A*-C) after which it should be possible to progress to level 3.
- Training may take place solely in the workplace or on day release courses at college.

Advanced Apprenticeship (Level 3)

- A level 3 qualification (equivalent to at least 2 A levels).
- For 16+ year olds who have gained a minimum of 5 GCSEs at grades A*-C.
- Trainees will be paid a training wage and work towards qualifications in NVQs, Functional Skills and Technical Certificates.
- Training may take place solely in the workplace or on day release courses at college.
- Usually takes two years to complete and it is possible to progress to a Foundation Degree at university.

Higher Apprenticeships (Level 4 and above)

Higher Apprenticeships offer ambitious existing apprentices and employees as well as A Level school leavers, a different route to traditional university study. In 2013 there will be 41 Higher Apprenticeships to choose from and apprenticeships at bachelors and masters degree level will become available for the first time. Occupational areas include Accounting, Advertising & Marketing, Banking, Business, Construction, Engineering, Fashion & Textiles, Hospitality Management, IT & Web Professionals, Life Sciences; with many more in development.

How to Apply for Apprenticeships

Go to the National Apprenticeship Service website **www.apprenticeships.org.uk**, where you can register, search and apply for apprenticeship positions nationwide.

You can also look at local apprenticeship providers' websites to find apprenticeship opportunities in our area, e.g. www.apprenticeships-in-sussex.com; www.rewardstraining.co.uk; www.jace-training.co.uk; www.sigta.co.uk; www.stevewillis.com.

Further details about Apprenticeships and how to apply can be found on the following pages.

TRAINEESHIPS

The government has developed a new programme to help young people aged 16-24 who are not quite ready to take up an apprenticeship or employment immediately on leaving school, assisting them to become ~~work~~ ready.

A Traineeship allows a young person to get prepared for an apprenticeship first by working towards non-qualification skills of preparing for employment, CV writing, interview skills and a host of other work related skills. At the same time the trainee will work again on their Maths or English qualifications if they do not have an A*-C grade for their GCSEs. At the commencement of the programme the trainee is assessed and has advice and guidance as to which vocational qualification they would like to follow. This is followed by a choice of work experience providers.

The aim of traineeships is to secure young people's progression to an apprenticeship or sustainable job as quickly as possible. As part of this programme it is essential that they undertake high quality and meaningful work experience which has to be for a minimum of six weeks and not more than six months. The content of this would be designed by the employer and the training provider together, along with the trainee to create a work experience plan that suits all.

Traineeships are exempt from the national minimum wage and employers are not required to pay trainees but are encouraged to support with lunch and travel costs. Employers are expected to provide trainees with a reference and an exit interview, or job interview if a role becomes available, at the end of the work experience.

Traineeship opportunities are available through local colleges and training providers, as well as being advertised on the National Apprenticeship vacancy site **www.apprenticeships.org.uk**.

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT APPRENTICESHIPS

What is an Apprenticeship?

An Apprenticeship is a real job with training so you can earn while you learn. You work towards qualifications in NVQs, Functional Skills and Technical Certificates. They take between one and four years to complete resulting in a nationally recognised qualification at one of the following levels:

- ~ Intermediate Level Apprenticeship (level 2)
- ~ Advanced Level Apprenticeship (level 3)
- ~ Higher Apprenticeship (level 4 or above)

There are more than 280 different types of Apprenticeship available covering 1,500 different job roles.

Who can do an Apprenticeship?

You must be at least 16 years old, and be in employment of more than 30 hours per week.

What are the entry requirements?

There are three types of Apprenticeship you can apply for depending on your current skills and qualifications.

Entry requirements vary depending on the Apprenticeship and the industry sector, e.g. an Engineering Apprenticeship may want a Science GCSE, whereas a Customer Service Apprenticeship with a travel agent may look for someone with a language GCSE.

In general:

- ~ Intermediate Level Apprenticeship (level 2) . GCSEs in Maths and English at grade C or above.
- ~ Advanced Level Apprenticeship (level 3) . 5 GCSEs at grade C or above, including Maths and English and usually with other specific subjects or a NVQ level 2 in a related field.
- ~ Higher Apprenticeship (level 4 or above) . Usually 2 A levels or a NV3 level 3 in a related field.

How much will I be paid?

You will be paid £2.65 per hour minimum, but employers are encouraged to pay the national average of £178 per week. In some job roles you can earn more than this.

Training - how many days a week will I have to attend college?

As an employee you will be in your place of employment for most of your time as most training takes place on the job. The rest usually takes place at a local college or a specialist training organisation. You can complete this off-the-job training on day release or over a number of days in a block. The amount of time you spend varies according to your Apprenticeship. It could be anything from one day every fortnight to two days every week.

How do I apply for an Apprenticeship?

Visit the Apprenticeships website to search and apply for vacancies. At any one time there are thousands of jobs available in a variety of industry sectors across England. You can apply for as many as you like.

You should be looking at the website regularly from March onwards as this is when many employers advertise their vacancies.

www.apprenticeships.org.uk

Registering on the website is very straightforward, and will allow you to search for your chosen career opportunities. You can search via occupation, location, job title or learning provider, e.g. Central Sussex College.

Searching for an Apprenticeship vacancy has never been easier, especially with the launch of the new smartphone mobile application called '**AV Searchq**' available now on Google Play (for Android users) and on the Apple App Store (for iOS/iPhone users). It's free to download and is ad-free.



You can search for vacancies by keyword, vacancy reference number and location of vacancy (by post code or county). The app then displays all the relevant job matches and shows information such as the salary, the employer, working hours and the closing date for applications. You can then apply for the vacancy by linking through to the main Apprenticeship vacancies website.

The on-line application form

It is very important that once you find the position you want to apply for, you complete the form with as much information as possible. It is useful to have your CV to hand; this is the only opportunity you will have to show an employer why they should interview you.

You will be asked the following:

What are your strengths?

Make sure the application form reflects the job description. If they are looking for someone who is: helpful, hardworking, a team player, good knowledge of IT, confident, willing to train etc, then you have to ensure this is all stated in the section called . **About you.**

What personal skills would you like to improve?

It's always good to add something in this section. There are always things we can improve on, and an employer will not believe you if you say nothing. Use this section to give examples such as communication skills, use of IT, or improving your maths or English. The employer will not expect you to have excellent skills in everything, but showing you can acknowledge your weaknesses and are willing to work to improve them, will come across as positive.

You may be asked additional questions:

What do you know about the company?

You should know as much as possible about the company, either using the job specification on the Apprenticeship website, or by using Google search. Do not just copy and paste the information, use your own words and show enthusiasm.

Why do you want an apprenticeship in this field?

Only you know the answer to this. Talk about your passion for the subject, what motivates you about it, and why you have chosen to dedicate the next few years to studying and showing commitment to the subject. Remember the more enthusiastic you come across to an employer, the more willing they will be to commit their time in training you.

Your career and prospects

Employers really value Apprenticeships. They know if you have one that you will have the skills they need, and as a result your career could progress rapidly.

People with an Advanced Level Apprenticeship earn, on average, over £100,000 more than those without, over the course of their career.

Your career doesn't have to stop at the Intermediate, Advanced or Higher Level Apprenticeship. If you want to go on to university you will find that many Higher Education institutes value your skills and knowledge and will offer you a place on a Foundation Degree or other higher level qualifications.

Research on Social Networks

YouTube

www.youtube.com/NASApprenticeships
Over 200 Apprenticeship videos uploaded

Facebook

www.facebook.com/apprenticeships

Twitter

@apprenticeships

Would you like help?

Students need to be proactive in arranging their own apprenticeship place but if you would like any further information, or help with registering and applying for vacancies, Ms Hart in the Careers Office will be only too happy to help.

Remember ...

Students considering an apprenticeship should also make a college application for a full-time course in the area you are interested in, as a back-up measure. If you do not find a job before the start of the college year you should start on the full-time course. If at any time during the full-time course you manage to find a suitable job, you can be transferred on to the apprenticeship programme subject to various conditions being met by your employer.

A parent's guide to Apprenticeships

Introduction

As a parent you want your child to get the best possible start in their career. There are many options available to young people after they leave school, and in this guide we outline information and benefits about Apprenticeships as a key route into securing a job and progressing into a successful career.

What is an Apprenticeship

An Apprenticeship is a job with training which allows individuals to earn while they learn, whilst gaining nationally recognised qualifications. Most of the training is delivered in the work place, with an element of 'off the job' training which usually takes place with a training provider or at a college.

If your child lives in England, is over 16 and not in full time education they can apply.

The core components are:

- A nationally recognised vocational qualification
- Functional skills, such as working in teams, problem solving, literacy and numeracy, communication and using new technology
- A technical certificate such as a BTEC or City & Guilds (relevant to your specific Apprenticeship)
- Other professional qualifications or requirements as specified by the particular job.

Benefits of doing an Apprenticeship

- Earning a salary
- Training in the skills employers want
- Excellent progression opportunities, whether looking to study further or climb the ranks within the workplace
- Increased future earning potential. Apprentices enjoy marked salary increases when they complete their training
- Better long term salary prospects (those with an Advanced Apprenticeship earn around £117,000* more than those without, over the course of their career)
- Learning at a pace suited to the individual with the support of a mentor
- There are three entry points, and progression through the different levels:
 - Intermediate Level Apprenticeship (level 2)
 - Advanced Level Apprenticeship (level 3)
 - Higher Apprenticeship (level 4 or above)

Salaries

The minimum wage for apprentices is £2.65 per hour, but many employers pay more than this. The average gross weekly wage for an apprentice is £200**. This is dependant on the sector, region and Apprenticeship level e.g. some Higher Apprenticeships can pay as much as £300 - £500 per week.

For more detail on salaries and entry criteria in specific Apprenticeship occupations you can look at advertised vacancies on apprenticeships.org.uk

Entry requirements

Apprenticeships are available to anyone over the age of 16. There are different entry requirements depending on the sector and job. Apprentices need to be committed, motivated, enthusiastic and reliable, with a 'can-do' attitude.

Duration

They last for a minimum of one year, however many can take longer, especially if they are at a higher level or in a certain sectors such as engineering.

More information and next steps

- Applying for Apprenticeships - apprenticeships.org.uk gives people the opportunity to search and apply for Apprenticeship vacancies. At any one time there are up to 15,000 jobs available in a variety of careers and industries across England. Candidates can apply for as many as they like.
 1. Go to apprenticeships.org.uk
 2. Click the "Search for vacancies" link to register.
- Watch videos of real apprentices telling their stories and browse the frequently asked questions at apprenticeships.org.uk



Find out more about
Apprenticeships and
view vacancies now
apprenticeships.org.uk

16-19 BURSARY FUND

The Government has set aside some money for schools, colleges, training providers and local authorities to allocate to young people who need financial support to stay on in full and part-time further education or training. It can help with any education-related costs that may arise during the school year such as the cost of travel, uniforms, educational visits, books and equipment.

There are two types of bursaries:

Vulnerable student bursary . Students can receive up to £1,200 per year if they:

- are in local authority care or have recently left local authority care; or
- receive Income Support or Universal Credit (a new benefit which will replace Income Support) in your own name; or
- are disabled and receive both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments (a new benefit which will replace Disability Living Allowance) in your own name.

Discretionary bursary . You can apply for a discretionary bursary if you are not eligible for a vulnerable bursary but you need financial help to stay on in further education or training. Your school, college or training provider will have its own eligibility criteria as their funds are limited and they need to make sure it gets to the students who most need financial help to stay on in further education or training. The eligibility criteria might be based on your family's income, whether your parents receive benefits, or whether you have previously been entitled to free school meals. Payment of bursaries will depend on attendance, behaviour and standard of work.

You should make an application as soon as you have decided where you are going to study. The sooner you apply, the sooner you will start to receive support. Students should contact the student support services of the college they are going to.

For further information visit www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund.

Learner Support

The Education Funding Agency (EFA) is concerned with providing financial and related support to people who would otherwise find it a struggle, if not impossible, to stay in learning. Visit www.education.gov.uk to find a link to the EFA, where you can find details about the various forms of help available to learners of all ages.

If you have any queries please call the Learner Support Helpline on **0800 121 8989**.

Young learners looking for financial help will find a visit to the www.gov.uk site worthwhile.

Care to Learn

If you are under 20 and have a child of your own, you may be able to claim Care to Learn. This provides help with childcare and travel costs for young parents who are in education. Care to Learn is available to a young father or mother, as long as the other parent is unable to provide childcare. For further details visit www.gov.uk/care-to-learn or call the Learner Support Helpline 0800 121 8989.

West Sussex County Council

May be able to assist with certain costs for post 16 education (especially transport) where eligibility criteria are satisfied.

TRAVEL

Further Education is at present still free, although parents / students have to pay travel costs. You should bear this in mind when applying.

The following local authorities have arranged for full time Further Education students in their areas to receive 34% discounts on the price of rail season tickets:

- West Sussex County Council
- East Sussex County Council
- Brighton and Hove Council

To qualify for a discounted season ticket you must:

- Live in one of the above areas (if you live in one of the above areas but travel in another county you may still qualify . contact Southern Railway with your journey details to find out more).
- Have a valid Sussex Student Card. These are issued by the college once you have started your course.
- Apply on line via www.southernrailwaytickets.com .