

2011-12

AFTER YEAR 9 IN YORK

Choosing options
within your son
or daughter's
school

LET'S GET STARTED

Welcome to After Year 9 in York

This stage of education is all about option choices within your son or daughter's school. Our aim is to help you and your son or daughter to start making course choices for Years 10 and 11 together.

The number and variety of courses have been growing over the last few years: there are new qualifications, new subjects and new ways of learning. This booklet provides easy-to-follow information that will get you started, and shows you where to go next for more advice and guidance.

You can find out much more by attending the **York Options & Opportunities Evening** for Year 9 students, parents and carers: **Wednesday 19 October 2011, 3:30pm–8:00pm, in the Knavesmire Stand at York Racecourse.**

This booklet sets out:

- What's available?
- Making choices
- What about the future?
 - Education and training options after Year 11
 - Employment and the job market
 - Thinking about Higher Education?
- Further help and advice: where to look, who to talk to
- Get in touch in York

Raising the participation age

Participation in education and training is rising, and current legislation sets out an aspiration that your son or daughter will continue until age 18 (therefore being involved in some form of participation in the two years after Year 11).

This will help ensure that every young person has the opportunity to gain skills and qualifications that help them to progress to Higher Education, work and adult life; enabling them to succeed in the modern, fast changing world.

**Whatever you need to know,
there's someone who can help.**

WHAT'S AVAILABLE?

The options your son or daughter might take

The range of choices for your son or daughter can seem complicated. That is partly because you might hear them referred to in different ways: by a subject (History or Engineering), by a type of qualification (GCSE or BTEC), by an exam body (OCR or Edexcel) by a general term ('Work Related Learning') or by a level (Entry Level, Level 1 or Level 2).

So, over the following few pages, we've tried to give you a simple explanation of the main options, describing the qualification types and levels for Year 10 and 11.

Remember that your son or daughter will be studying some core compulsory subjects, which usually include English, Maths and Science. Other options are then added to these core subjects. In addition there is a range of enrichment opportunities available to your son or daughter, which may be extra-curricular in nature, including enterprise competitions, fundraising activities, volunteering, clubs and societies, leadership courses etc. These provide excellent opportunities to develop skills, interests and self-confidence. Please check with your individual school for details.

Options for Year 10 and Year 11: a summary

Qualifications

- GCSEs (Levels 1–2)
- Vocational qualifications (Levels 1–2)
- Foundation Learning Programme (Entry Level and Level 1)

Delivery

- Some qualifications may be delivered in partnership with other schools, Colleges or other providers, or with input from employers.
- There may be delivery away from the usual school site.

GCSEs (Levels 1–2)



Many of you will be familiar with GCSEs (General Certificate of Secondary Education). The majority of Year 10s will be following this pathway.

Pupils usually choose from a selection of subjects, and most of the ones on offer will be familiar from Years 7–9, though there may be some new ones (Business Studies, for example). GCSEs are assessed by exams and controlled assessment.

There may be some courses which count for two GCSEs, such as Business and sometimes a 'short course' GCSE is on offer, such as Religious Education which is half a GCSE.

GCSEs are graded A* to G:

- Level 1 = grades D to G
- Level 2 = grades A* to C

Some subjects have a choice of 'tiers' (called Higher or Foundation) which affect the possible range of grades that can be achieved. Teachers will advise you about this.

Some subjects may be offered as Applied GCSEs, which usually means much of the learning is related to 'real life' tasks; for example, in Applied Business, using case studies about an actual company.

Some GCSEs involve more practical work than others, but pupils choosing practical subjects like Physical Education or Food Technology will find they will contain classroom based work as well.

Schools may offer other qualifications which take up the place of one or two GCSE choices. An example is the OCR National in Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

Generally, whatever GCSEs your son or daughter chooses, there will still be a wide range of pathways after Year 11. There are, however, some advanced level courses where they may be required to have taken the same subject at GCSE, such as French A Level which may require a pass grade A* to C in GCSE French. Some Higher Education courses also specify certain GCSEs as entry requirements, particularly in the area of science degrees.

Vocational qualifications (Levels 1–2)

Vocational qualifications are work related qualifications which can equip you with the skills and knowledge related to particular sectors or industries, and offer more practical opportunities for learning. They are taught alongside some core GCSEs (such as English and Maths) and other GCSEs. You will need to check with your school exactly which core subjects will be compulsory, and also whether your son or daughter can do any other GCSEs if s/he wants to alongside the vocational qualifications. There is a statutory requirement to study certain subjects at Key Stage 4.

There may be a number of vocational options available at your son or daughter's school (sometimes in partnership and delivered at a different school or college), such as:

Vocational subjects: Many schools enter some students for vocational qualifications which can include core subjects (like Science and IT), to young people who learn better in a more practical setting. These include:

- OCR Nationals
- BTECs in a variety of subjects
- Diplomas
- Young Achievers Programme (York College)

Preparation for Employment qualifications include:

- ASDAN Certificate of Personal Effectiveness
- Work Skills



Vocational qualifications can lead to further study, an Apprenticeship or employment. With further study you can move on to a vocational qualification at a higher level in the same or a related area. Vocational qualifications do not provide a direct route onto A Level study.

Diplomas

Diplomas, first launched in September 2008, combine academic and applied learning with practical experience of a particular industry sector. Pupils choose a single Diploma subject (sometimes called a 'line') which is broadly related to an industry or areas of work. Please note: you may see schools or colleges offering a BTEC Diploma. This is a different qualification entirely, so check information about it carefully with your school.

Diplomas are awarded at:

- Level 1 (Foundation), equivalent to five GCSE grades D to G
- Level 2 (Higher), equivalent to approximately 7.5 GCSE grades A* to C

There are five areas of learning:

- Principal Learning—core learning related to the chosen line.
- Functional Skills—the application of English, Maths and ICT in real life and work scenarios.
- Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills—skills such as problem solving, teamworking etc.
- A project—sector specific.
- Work Experience—a minimum of ten days' experience of work relating to the Diploma line.
- Additional / Specialist Learning—usually drawn from your school's option subjects and may be specific to the Diploma or alternatively something to widen skills.

Foundation Learning (Entry Level and Level 1)

Foundation Learning is a new national learning programme, providing a personalised tailored programme of qualifications. It enables pupils to build up credits of achievement at Entry Level or Level 1, and may be taken alongside GCSEs, other vocational qualifications and Diplomas.

The programme comprises three distinct elements:

- Vocational or subject learning, e.g. Catering, Hairdressing, Construction, Childcare, Working with Animals. This will vary from school to school.
- Functional Skills in English, Maths and ICT.
- Personal and Social Development learning: activities that will help develop skills such as team building, creativity and decision-making.

Learning takes place in various locations: some of it may be outside the school, at other schools, at the Danesgate Skills Centre, with work related learning providers, in the workplace with a local employer, or on a community-based volunteering project.

The programme is designed to support young people to progress at their own pace, build confidence and progress towards their next goal, whether that be Further Education, an Apprenticeship, supported employment or independent living.

The school will work with you and your son or daughter to ensure that the programme is appropriate and meets the aspirations that your son or daughter may have.

MAKING CHOICES

When choosing options it's important to have as much information as possible to make an informed decision. A good decision could affect enthusiasm to study, may affect grades and possibly career aims or plans.

Although this is an important time in your son or daughter's life, there are not many options now that will prevent him/her from changing direction or their qualification pathway post-16, after Year 11.

What you can do:

- Find out all the information regarding option choices specific to your son or daughter's school from events and booklets.
- Encourage your son or daughter to talk to the subject teachers to find out more information about course content, assessment and ways of learning.
- Ensure that your son or daughter understands the different qualifications available to them, which subjects are compulsory / core and which are optional.
- Ask questions:
 - What information, advice, guidance and support is available in school about all options? Encourage your son or daughter to talk to a tutor or adviser about this.
 - Schools deliver a Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance programme to help your son or daughter make decisions. Have a chat with them about this.

Encourage your son or daughter to think about:

- Which subjects they are good at
- Not choosing a subject just because they like the teacher or their friends have chosen it
- Choosing subjects that they will enjoy—this will help motivate them to learn
- Taking into account their preferred learning style. How is the subject taught? Is it practical? Does it involve writing essays? Does it involve using research or statistics?
- Think about the career areas they might be interested in, in the longer term, and start to explore information about any specific entry requirements and training that may be involved

The English Baccalaureate

When choosing GCSEs subjects, one possibility is to pick a combination which meets the specification of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). This is not a new qualification in itself; it recognises the success of those students who attain GCSEs or iGCSEs at grade A* to C across a core of five academic subjects:

- English
- Maths
- A humanity (History or Geography)
- The Sciences
- A language

It is important that there is an emphasis on a broad and balanced core of learning, and your son or daughter should be able to undertake a combination of both academic or vocational subjects if they wish to.

Please note: The EBacc is not a requirement for entry to Higher Education.



WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?

Education and training options after Year 11

Options after Year 11: a summary

Full-time education at school or college

- AS and A Levels (Level 3)
- International Baccalaureate Diploma (Level 3)
- BTEC and National Diploma qualifications (Level 3)
- The Diploma (Level 3)
- Other vocational qualifications (Levels 1–3)
- Foundation Learning Programme (Entry Level – Level 1)

Apprenticeship training whilst working

- Apprenticeship training (Level 2–3)
- Combined with employment
- An Apprenticeship is the most common way to combine a job with training
- There are pre-Apprenticeship programmes available which can prepare a young person for an Apprenticeship

A flexible package of part time working and part time participation

- Participation in relevant and sufficient training or education, such as Foundation Learning (Entry Level – Level 1)
- Combined with a range of employment options including volunteering and paid work, which total at least 20 hours per week
- Some of the detail around part time working and part time participation, to ensure a young person is participating in line with the raising of the participation age, is still evolving. There will be further information in due course, which will be disseminated to parents, students, schools, colleges and other providers and to employers.

For more detailed information about options after Year 11, refer to:

- The booklet for parents After Year 11 in York (available to view/download at www.futures4meyork.com) and find more information at www.yor-ok.org.uk
- For specific information on courses see the online 14–19 Prospectus, where you can search for courses or providers in your area: www.futures4meyork.com.
- Please also refer to the links on page 15.

Generally, whatever options your son or daughter chooses, there will still be a wide range of pathways after Year 11.

Your son or daughter will not always be limited to continuing with the same subjects or type of course. A pupil taking a Level 2 Diploma, for example, may decide to progress on to A Levels or an Apprenticeship and, equally, someone taking GCSEs may decide to take an Apprenticeship after Year 11.

There are, however, some Advanced Level courses where they may be required to have successfully studied the same subject or one closely linked to it.

Achieving GCSE A* to C in Maths and English is recognised as being very important and means that a greater range of progression opportunities are available.

Post-16 options are available at different levels—what is right for your son or daughter will depend upon the grades or level they achieve at the end of Year 11.



Employment and the job market

Many young people have no firm career plans when they are in Year 9 but it is important to start thinking about options which might affect choices and skills development at this stage.

Better qualified and more highly skilled people generally earn more money and have more job options. Continuing in education and training helps young people develop their skills and become better qualified. With the fast pace of change in business and industry today, they need to put themselves in the best position to meet the needs of employers in the future.

If your son or daughter decides to live and work in York, they need to know about the nature of the local economy and jobs market. In the last 20 years, manufacturing in the York area has declined, but many other sectors have grown. York's employment rates are high, with strong demand in:

- Business and finance, including insurance
- York's visitor economy, which covers retail, hospitality, catering and tourism attractions
- Science and environmental technologies
- Creative and digital businesses

We are experiencing difficult times now, but the high proportion of older workers means that as they retire, job opportunities will still exist in areas like health, education and advanced engineering.

Employers continue to value good basic skills in literacy, numeracy, communication and IT. But now they expect high level interpersonal skills, drive and ambition to ensure their business succeeds.

Many people also travel into York from surrounding areas and most jobs are not as close to home as schools are. York's young people will face competition from others outside of the city and will have to consider travelling to work in neighbouring cities such as Leeds.

So, the message is: your son or daughter needs to make the most of their school, college or training provider and gain the most appropriate skills and qualifications to help them succeed.

Please note: The online common application process provides up-to-date information and advice about courses and qualifications and there is also detailed careers information, all at **www.futures4meyork.com**. The Careers Education, Information Advice and Guidance programme in your son or daughter's school will also offer relevant information.

Thinking about Higher Education?

Nowadays, young people can progress to Higher Education (HE) with a range of qualifications, including:

- AS and A Levels
- International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD)
- BTEC Nationals
- Diplomas
- Apprenticeships

York based HE providers have confirmed that they recognise the value of a broad and balanced curriculum at GCSE level, and that most applicants achieve this without the need for the kind of prescription introduced by the English Baccalaureate. This is the position of universities nationally, though clearly this will be kept under review. Details on the current view of universities will be available on their websites.



York has two universities (the University of York and York St John University) and two colleges (Askham Bryan College and York College), which offer a wide range of HE courses, both academic and work-based (e.g. Foundation Degrees). So there is likely to be a programme suited to your son or daughter on offer locally. If they would like to go further afield, there are over 300 universities and colleges across the country offering over 50,000 courses (see UCAS details on page 15), so your son or daughter should be able to find a course that interests them!

Costs and financial support

From September 2012, universities and other HE providers in England will be able to charge £6,000 to £9,000 fees per year to new entrants. (Tuition fees at private higher education institutions are not subject to this limit.) No fees will be paid up front and fee loans will be available. Graduates will not start repaying these loans until they are earning at least £21,000 a year.

In addition to applying for loans to cover tuition fees and living costs, there will also be a new National Scholarship Programme as well as non repayable maintenance grants available to students from lower income families. Individual institutions may offer different support opportunities through scholarships, bursaries and tuition fee reductions.

Higher Education: where to find out more

- For information about studying HE in York: **www.studyork.com**
- For information about your options and help making a choice: **www.futures4meyork.com**
- Higher York and its partner universities and colleges will develop an enhanced package of support for young people applying to HE in the coming years. Higher York will be running a rolling programme of seminars at the Options and Opportunities Evening on 19 October, with questions and answers sessions on HE and finances; and there will also be an information stand.
- **<http://yourfuture.direct.gov.uk/>** contains information on the new costs, financial support, and repayments including a simple repayments calculator (with payments based upon the starting salary of the selected career).
- Attend an open day:
 - York St John University: **www.yorks.j.ac.uk**; upcoming dates include 10 October, 22 October, 26 October 2011 (places must be booked online).
 - University of York: **www.york.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/open-days/**; upcoming dates include 1 October 2011 (places must be booked online).
 - Askham Bryan College: **www.askham-bryan.ac.uk**
 - York College: **www.yorkcollege.ac.uk**; upcoming dates include 29 September 2011.

Local universities and colleges will be supporting activity to promote access to HE for all young people. It is important to consider the long term value of Higher Education, in terms of both the potential financial rewards to be gained through access to more highly paid jobs (on average graduate salaries are considerably higher), and the value of the wider experiences available through participation.

FURTHER HELP AND ADVICE: WHERE TO

You should be involved in the decision-making process around your son or daughter's options and choices in Year 9. But that doesn't mean you have to be an expert. Schools and colleges have teachers, careers co-ordinators and/or advisers who can answer questions and give advice on which pathway is most suitable.

Youth Support Services

Information, advice, guidance and support is available from Youth Support Services through your son or daughter's school. Youth Support Services work with young people all over the city, they run youth centres, support services, sport and leisure opportunities, the Duke of Edinburgh's award, and much more. Get in touch through one of the centres—see the back cover for details.

Transition Team

The Transition Team works with young people with disabilities, and their parents and carers, in planning their next steps after school or college. If your son or daughter has a special educational need, you may already be in touch with them through school, but you can also contact them directly—see the back cover for details.



LOOK, WHO TO TALK TO

On the web and on the phone

General help

www.direct.gov.uk/en/youngpeople

Phone: **080 800 13 2 19**

Text: **07766 4 13 2 19**

A free and confidential information, advice and support service for young people, providing advice to help make the right career choices.

Available 8am–2am, 7 days a week

www.yor-ok.org.uk

All sorts of information on services for young people in York

www.direct.gov.uk/en/parents

A free information, advice and support service for parents on a range of issues from money and work to schools, learning and development.

Training and Apprenticeships

www.getconnectednow.co.uk

Connecting young people with Apprenticeships, training opportunities and jobs in York and North Yorkshire

www.apprenticeships.org.uk

Information on Apprenticeships—how they work, how to apply and what opportunities are available locally

Finding out about courses

www.futures4meyork.com

To access the online common application process, for courses across York and North Yorkshire. This is also where an electronic copy of *After Year 9 in York* and *After Year 11 in York* will be available.

Higher Education

www.ucas.com

Detailed information about all courses, institutions, tuition fees and application procedures, including deadlines

www.studyork.com

Information about studying HE in York

www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

and yourfuture.direct.co.uk

Two websites providing information, advice and guidance on all aspects of student finance, including a calculator to provide an estimate of the financial support which could be received.

Employment issues

www.direct.gov.uk/employment

Wide range of advice on employment and rights relating to it

www.worksmart.org.uk/rights/young_workers

Employment rights information for young workers, from the TUC

Volunteering

www.yorkcvs.org.uk/content/volunteering-york

and www.yorkcares.co.uk

Two local websites providing information about volunteering

www.do-it.org.uk

Search for volunteering opportunities internationally, nationally and locally

www.vinspired.com

Volunteering information for 16–25s

GET IN TOUCH IN YORK

Information, advice, guidance and support is available from Youth Support Services through your son or daughter's school.

68 Centre
Monkton Road • York • YO31 9AN
01904 422203

Moor Lane Youth Centre
Wains Road • Dringhouses • York • YO24 2TX
01904 551761

Transition Team
for young people with disabilities
The Transitions Zone • Applefields School
Bad Bargain Lane • York • YO31 0LW
01904 552085

Head office
10–12 George Hudson Street • York • YO1 6LP
01904 552350 • www.yor-ok.org.uk

An electronic copy of this booklet is available at
www.yor-ok.org.uk.

If you would like any additional information or would like to receive this information in an accessible format, for example in large print, Braille, or on CD, please contact Melissa Stevens, 14–19 Support Adviser: email melissa.stevens@york.gov.uk or telephone 01904 553013.

About this booklet

This booklet was written by
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We value your feedback.
If you would like to share your thoughts about this publication, please visit www.yor-ok.org.uk

This information can be provided in your own language.

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (پہلی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

☎ (01904) 551550

Information, advice and guidance from Youth Support Services:

- is independent, impartial and client centred
- takes full account of factors affecting labour markets
- promotes equality of opportunity

The information in this booklet was correct at the time of printing, September 2011.
Please verify details with the institutions concerned.