

Monthly Careers Newsletter

November Edition ♦



NEXT STEPS ...

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

Dear Year 11 Students,
Welcome to the first edition of our Year 11 Careers Newsletter! As you approach the end of your GCSE journey, we know you have big decisions ahead about your future. Whether you're thinking about sixth form, college, apprenticeships, or entering the world of work, this newsletter is here to guide you every step of the way.

Each month, we'll bring you helpful insights into different careers, tips on developing employability skills, and updates on current goals to keep you on track. We'll cover everything you need to make informed choices about your next steps.

This is your chance to explore, ask questions, and discover what path excites you most.

We hope this newsletter helps you feel confident and empowered as you shape your future career. Let's make this year one of exploration and success!

Stay curious and keep an open mind — your next steps start here!

Last month, I launched Media Thursdays and the Careers team channel. Both of these are to support you and keep you in the loop as a range of information and opportunities come your way. Please continue to engage with these and use the Teams channel as a digital base for the most up to date news.

As you're getting closer to some big milestones, we want to let you know that next month's edition will focus on two important topics: applying to college and preparing for your mock exams.

For those of you considering college, we'll provide guidance on choosing the right courses, how to navigate the application process, and tips for writing a strong personal statement.

I'll also spotlight local colleges and upcoming open days to help you explore your options.

In addition, with mock exams just around the corner, we'll be sharing advice on how to prepare effectively, manage stress, and balance revision with everything else on your plate.

Stay tuned for plenty of practical tips to help you feel confident and ready for the weeks ahead!

In this newsletter you can expect:

Monthly breakdown

Key dates

Application tips and advice

Which pathway is best for me?

Revision tips

Career of the month

Advice and support

Miss Sanchez

CAREERS LEAD

Which pathway is best for me?

As you approach the end of Year 11, it's time to start thinking about what comes next. There are several routes available to you, each offering unique opportunities depending on your career goals, interests, and preferred learning style. Here's a breakdown of the main options:

Sixth Form (A-Levels)

- **What is it?:** Sixth form allows you to stay in school and study A-Levels, usually choosing three or four subjects that interest you.
- **Who is it for?:** If you enjoy academic subjects and plan to go to university, this is a good option. A-Levels are highly valued by universities and employers alike.
- **Duration:** 2 years.
- **Next Steps After:** University, apprenticeships, or employment.

College (Vocational Courses or A-Levels)

- **What is it?:** Colleges offer a wide variety of qualifications, including A-Levels, BTECs, NVQs, and more. Vocational courses focus on practical skills for specific careers (e.g., healthcare, engineering, IT).
- **Who is it for?:** If you're more interested in hands-on learning or a specific career path, vocational courses may suit you better than A-Levels.
- **Duration:** 1-3 years, depending on the course.
- **Next Steps After:** University, apprenticeships, or straight into work in your chosen field.

Apprenticeships

- **What is it?:** An apprenticeship allows you to work while learning, gaining practical experience and studying for a qualification at the same time.
- **Who is it for?:** If you're eager to enter the workforce and learn a trade or profession, apprenticeships offer a great combination of earning and learning.
- **Duration:** Typically 1-4 years.
- **Next Steps After:** Higher-level apprenticeships, employment, or even university in some cases.

T-Levels

- **What is it?:** T-Levels are a new, two-year qualification equivalent to 3 A-Levels. They combine classroom learning with on-the-job experience through industry placements.
- **Who is it for?:** If you want a mix of academic study and practical experience but are focused on a specific industry (e.g., digital, construction, healthcare), T-Levels are ideal.
- **Duration:** 2 years.
- **Next Steps After:** Skilled employment, higher apprenticeships, or university.

Traineeships

- **What is it?:** A traineeship is a short-term program that helps you develop the skills and experience needed for an apprenticeship or job. It includes work experience and support with English, maths, and employability skills..
 - **Who is it for?:** If you're not yet ready for an apprenticeship but want to improve your job prospects, a traineeship can be a stepping stone.
 - **Duration:** Up to 6 months
 - **Next Steps After:** Apprenticeships or employment.
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Employment with Training

- **What is it?:** You can enter full-time work, but by law, you must continue some form of education or training until you're 18. Many employers offer training programs or day release to study while working.
- **Who is it for?:** If you want to start earning straight away but still want to learn and gain qualifications, this is a good option.
- **Duration:** Varies depending on the employer's training plan..
- **Next Steps After:** Continued employment, promotions, or further training opportunities.

Application tips

Applying to college is an exciting step, and these tips will help you stay on track:

1. Start Early & Research

- **Explore options:** Look into different colleges and courses. Attend open days and check entry requirements for your chosen subjects.
- **Course content:** Make sure the course aligns with your interests and future goals.

2. Choose the Right Path

- **Academic or Vocational?:** Decide between academic (A-Levels) or vocational (BTECs, etc.), depending on your learning style and career plans.

3. Strong Personal Statement

- **Show your passion:** Highlight your interests, achievements, and why you're a great fit for the course.

4. Get Good References

- **Ask early:** Choose a teacher who knows your strengths well and can write a positive recommendation.

5. Prepare for Interviews

- **Practice:** Be ready to explain why you chose the course and ask insightful questions.

6. Stay Organized

- **Track deadlines:** Keep a calendar for application deadlines and make sure to proofread everything before submitting.

7. Ask for Help

- **Get feedback:** Ask teachers or family members to review your application and personal statement.

8. Have a Backup Plan

- **Apply to multiple colleges:** Keep your options open and apply to several colleges or courses.

9. Prepare for Results Day

- **Know your options:** If your results are lower than expected, many colleges may still accept you, or you can explore other pathways like apprenticeships.

Key Dates

Here are some upcoming college open days in and around Oldham that you might be interested in:

- **Oldham College** - Wednesday 6th November 2024 from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm
- **Hopwood Hall** - Wednesday 20th November 2024 from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm
- **Clarendon Sixth Form** - Monday 18th November 2024 from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm
- **Tameside College** - Monday 18th November 2024 from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm
- **Manchester College** - Thursday 21st November 2024 from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm

These events provide a great opportunity to explore the campus, meet tutors, and get advice on courses and the application process. Make sure to register online if required.

Support and advice

We never want you to feel alone in a stressful period like this, if you feel stressed or need support, please speak to your family, form tutor, year team or a member of staff you trust.

If you're feeling overwhelmed and like you can't cope, you can:

- Call [HOPELINEUK](tel:08000684141) on 0800 068 4141 or the [Samaritans](tel:116123) on 116 123.
- Text SHOUT to [Shout's textline](tel:85258) on 85258.
- Call the NHS on 111 and select option 2.

Interview tips

- **Research the College & Course:** Know the course structure, key topics, and why you chose the college.
- **Prepare for Key Questions:** Be ready to explain why you want the course and how it fits your goals. Highlight your strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Show Your Achievements:** Discuss academic strengths, extracurriculars, and any relevant work experience.
- **Ask Questions:** Prepare thoughtful questions about the college, such as student support or course resources.
- **Practice:** Rehearse answers, maintain positive body language, and stay calm during the interview.
- **Be Yourself:** Show enthusiasm and let your personality shine.
- **Dress Smartly:** Look neat and professional.

Mock exams - Revision tips

- 1. Create a Revision Timetable:** Plan study sessions for different subjects each day. Ensure these are in manageable chunks.
- 2. Focus on Weak Areas:** It's tempting to work on topics you find easier, ensure you prioritise challenging topics.
- 3. Use Active Techniques:** Flashcards, mind maps, and practice questions are all great ways to revise.
- 4. Teach Others:** Explaining concepts reinforces learning.
- 5. Take Breaks:** Use the Pomodoro technique—25 minutes study, 5 minutes break.
- 6. Review Past Papers:** Learn from previous mistakes.
- 7. Use Online Resources:** Sites like Sparx Maths, BBC Bitesize and Seneca can all help.
- 8. Stay Organized:** Keep notes and resources in order.
- 9. Look After Yourself:** Sleep, eat well, and stay hydrated.
- 10. Stay Positive:** Use mocks as a chance to improve.

Career of the month:

Cryptographer

Faculty link - Maths

Job Description:

Cryptographers create secure communication systems by developing encryption algorithms and protocols to protect sensitive data from unauthorised access. They work to ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and authenticity of information in various fields, including government, military, finance, and technology.

Responsibilities

- Installing, managing, and updating software on all the systems in an organisation
- Monitoring networks
- Developing security plans
- Compiling ongoing safety reports, and documenting security issues
- Staying updated with the latest potential threats and attacks
- Researching upcoming trends in information technology and security

Education:

- Companies tend to prefer candidates who have a degree in a related subject, or who have completed an apprenticeship in cyber security. However, it is also possible to enter this profession if you have the right aptitude but an unrelated degree, or even no degree.
- You could complete a Certified Ethical Hacker Certification, a Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP) qualification, or a Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA) qualification.

Preferred skills:

- Strong mathematical foundation, particularly in areas such as algebra, number theory, and probability.
- Understanding of programming languages (e.g., Python, Java, C++).
- Analytical and problem-solving skills.

Salary Expectations

- Entry-Level: £25,000 - £40,000 per year
- Mid-Level: £40,000 - £70,000 per year
- Senior-Level: £70,000 - £100,000+ per year

Current Labour Market:

- There are currently 690,681 information technology professionals in the UK
- 1,505 in your local area of Oldham
- Average salary in the UK - **£45,295**
- Average salary in your region of North West - **£45,565**

Find out more information on this role via the Unifrog careers library:

<https://www.unifrog.org/student/careers/keywords/cyber-security-analyst>

Thank you for reading!