

YOUR CHOICES

YOUR GUIDE TO 14-19 EDUCATION IN WILTSHIRE

Still at school
or college?

There has
never been
more choice!



This leaflet and links are aimed at letting you and your parents know about your choices and where to find out more.

For more information visit:
www.wiltshire.gov.uk/choices

Wiltshire Council
Where everybody matters

Education and training is changing for people aged 14-19 years:

What's in this booklet ...

This is to make sure that:

- you have the skills you need for learning, work and adult life
- there is an option that suits you and allows you to change direction, qualification or pathway
- every option leads to a choice of pathways through learning (school, college, university) and into work.

Qualifications:

Do you understand the qualifications system and know how it can help you in the future?

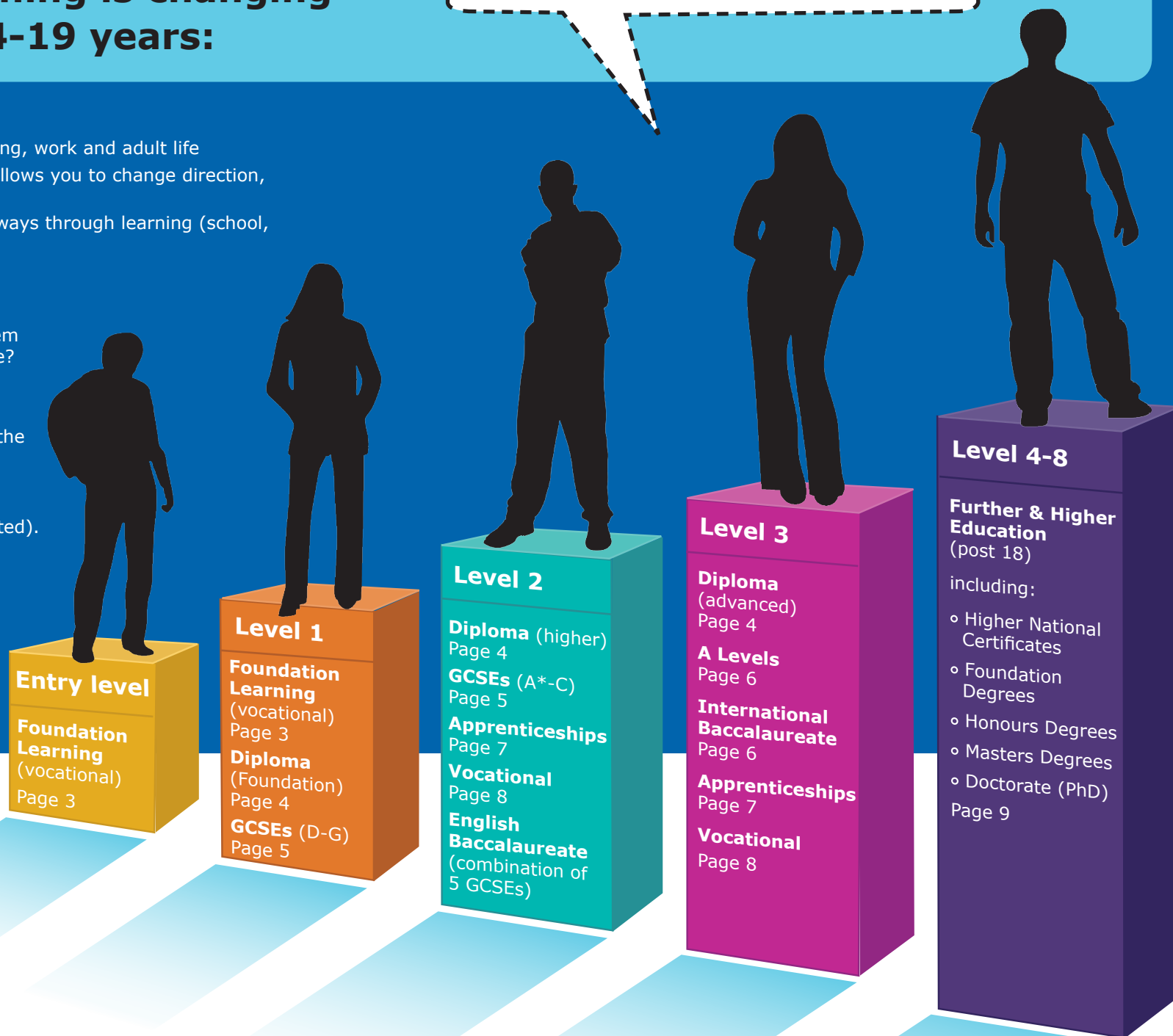
- There are eight levels of qualifications (lowest to highest)
- Entry level is the first with level eight the highest
- Every level includes different types of qualifications (subject-based, work-related, job-related).

The world is changing fast...

Employers need young people with higher levels of skills and qualifications.

Employers also need different types of qualifications, not just GCSEs and A-levels.

We want you to have choices in how and what you learn to enable you to make the best of your talents.



FOUNDATION LEARNING (FL)

Foundation Learning is for young people working at entry or level 1 (below GCSE A* - C).

It offers a flexible way of learning about things that interest you. It may not be called Foundation Learning in your school or college, so look out for a pathways programme or ask which route or programmes are Foundation Learning.

You are likely to have a programme of study that is personal to you and may include some GCSEs as well as:

- functional skills in English, maths and ICT to help you in everyday life at work or in further learning
- personal, social and development skills that you need to organise yourself, to work with other people and to get better at what you do
- vocational subjects where you learn practical skills that will help you in the future such as:
 - Hairdressing
 - Motor vehicle mechanics
 - Construction
 - Sports
 - Catering.

WHAT CAN YOU DO NEXT?

- Take courses that help you prepare for work and adult life
- Do a foundation or higher Diploma
- Study for GCSEs
- Apply for an Apprenticeship at Level 2
- Start work in a job with training.

For more information:

www.excellencegateway.org.uk/foundationlearning
www.wiltshire.gov.uk/choices
www.education.gov.uk/a0064167/foundation-learning

THE DIPLOMA

The Diploma is a qualification in some areas that schools, colleges, universities and employers helped to develop.

You will study both theory and practical subjects in areas that interest you.

Diplomas are for everybody and include:

- **Foundation Diploma** – this is a Level 1 qualification equivalent to five GCSEs at grades D to G
- **Higher Diploma** – this is a Level 2 qualification equivalent to seven GCSEs at grades A* to C
- **Advanced Diploma** – this is a Level 3 qualification equivalent to three and a half A levels

The Diploma can have three parts:

- subject learning (principal learning)
- additional and specialist learning
- Functional Skills in English, maths and ICT to help you in everyday life, at work or in further learning

All the above are qualifications that stand alone.

WHAT CAN YOU DO NEXT?

- A higher level Diploma in the same or a different subject
- AS and A Levels
- An Apprenticeship
- A vocational course that will qualify you to do a specific job
- An industry training scheme or another job with training
- Go onto higher education at university or college.

There are a range of subjects such as Travel and Tourism, Creative and Media, Engineering, Hospitality, Sport and Active Leisure.

There is a mix of classroom learning, practical hands-on, project work and work experience.

For more information:

www.wiltshire.gov.uk/choices
<http://yp.direct.gov.uk/diplomas>

GCSEs

You are most likely to have heard of GCSEs. You normally study these when you are 15 and 16 in a range of subjects.

You can take them alongside Foundation Learning programmes, Diploma and BTECs or equivalent.

GCSEs are aimed at learners working to Level 2:

- more than 50 different subjects are available
- many schools offer a similar range of subjects eg:
 - English
 - Maths
 - Science
 - Languages
 - Design and Technology
 - Humanities
 - Arts
- Applied GCSEs are also available eg:
 - Science
 - Business
 - IT
- GCSEs are mostly classroom learning with theory, subject-based and practical work.

WHAT CAN YOU DO NEXT?

- A higher or advanced Diploma
- AS and A Levels
- BTEC or equivalent
- An industry training scheme, or another job with training
- A vocational course that will qualify you to do a specific job.

For more information:

www.direct.gov.uk (search GCSEs)
www.wiltshire.gov.uk/choices
www.gcse.com

A LEVELS & INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE

Again, you are likely to have heard of AS and A Levels. You normally study these when you are 16 and 17 in a range of subjects.

You can study them alongside a Diploma and vocational qualifications. AS levels are aimed at learners working to Level 3 and are studied in Year 12.

A Levels are usually studied in Year 13; both are available in school sixth forms and colleges:

- There are over 100 different subjects
- Different choices in schools and colleges eg:
 - English
 - Maths
 - Science
 - Languages
 - Design and Technology
 - Humanities
 - Arts
- Applied A levels are also available eg:
 - Science
 - Business
 - IT
- Mostly classroom learning with theory, subject-based and practical work.

WHAT CAN YOU DO NEXT?

- An advanced vocational course that will qualify you to do a specific job
- A foundation degree in the same or a different subject at college or university
- An undergraduate degree in the same or a different subject at a university
- An advanced Apprenticeship
- An industry training scheme or job with training

The International Baccalaureate (IB) is studied in a small number of sixth forms in years 12 and 13 and covers a broad range of subjects at Level 3 including experience in languages, social studies, experimental sciences, arts and maths.

For more information:

www.direct.gov.uk (Search 'A'levels')
www.wiltshire.gov.uk/choices
www.ibo.org

APPRENTICESHIPS

Apprenticeships are aimed at people 16+ who would like to be employed and paid whilst continuing to study.

Skills gained on an apprenticeship can be both very practical and highly technical.

You will study for qualifications in your subject area and functional skills on the job or with a training provider such as a college.

The industry sectors they cover include: Art and Design; Business Administration; Accountancy; Construction; Energy; Engineering; Food and Drink; Manufacturing; Hairdressing; Health and Social Care; Hospitality; The Motor Industry; Performing Arts; Retail; Science; Sports Management, Leadership and Coaching.

- You gain a Level 2 or Level 3 vocational qualification
- Apprenticeships involve a mix of classroom learning and practical hands-on experience in various settings.

WHAT CAN YOU DO NEXT?

- Apprentices can progress from Level 2 to Level 3 Apprenticeships, jobs with training or further education
- Level 3 Apprentices can progress to higher education to study foundation or honours degrees
- Into full-time employment.

For more information:

www.apprenticeships.org.uk
www.wiltshire.gov.uk/choicesyp.direct.gov.uk
 (search apprenticeships)



VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Vocational qualifications enable you to learn skills relevant to a variety of jobs and will suit you if you know what area you might like to work in.

They are available at all levels and can be studied alongside other qualifications such as the Diploma, GCSEs, A Levels and Apprenticeships:

- There are hundreds of different subjects and qualifications to choose from (you may have heard of BTECs, OCN Nationals and NVQs).
- You can study in school, sixth form or college and with companies that provide training.
- Vocational qualifications are welcomed and recognised by employers, training providers, colleges and universities.
- Study includes a mixture of practical learning with theory, subject-based and practical work-based learning.

For more information:

www.wiltshire.gov.uk/choicesyp.direct.gov.uk
 (Search 'vocational qualifications')
www.edexcel.com/quals/btec
www.nocn.org.uk/qualifications

WHAT CAN YOU DO NEXT?

- GCSEs, Diplomas, A Levels, higher level vocational qualifications
- an Apprenticeship
- higher education to study foundation or honours degrees with Level 3 qualification
- an industry training scheme or job with training
- go into full-time employment.



FURTHER & HIGHER EDUCATION

Further and higher education offers a wide range of qualifications for young people who have achieved at Level 3 and wish to continue to study either full or part-time.

When you finish school, college or an apprenticeship you could do a Foundation Degree, Higher National Certificate, or Diploma at a college or university. Foundation Degrees are often 2 years and are stand alone qualifications that can be 'topped up' to a full degree with an additional period of study. You can also study for a full Degree.

All are aimed at:

- improving your subject knowledge and skills to a higher level
- specialising in an area of interest
- studying a new subject at a higher level
- training for a specific career
- improving your long term career options
- improving job opportunities and earning potential.

For more information:

www.wiltshire.gov.uk/choices
yp.direct.gov.uk
www.direct.gov.uk/uni
www.ucas.ac.uk
fd.ucas.com

What happens at the end of year 11?



If you have heard that you must stay on at school until you are 18, it's not true!

The government would like all young people to be involved in some form of training up to the age of 18, this is called Raising of the Participation Age (RPA).

The aim is for you to stay in some type of learning which could be further study or a job with training.

When you are 16 your options are to:

- go to a school 6th form or to a college or training provider
- Study for qualifications like a BTEC, AS/A Levels and or vocational qualifications
- apply for an Apprenticeship
- start work in a job with accredited training – that's training which leads to a qualification

All will prepare you either for work or to study higher level qualifications at college or university when you are 18.

For more information:

www.wiltshire.gov.uk/choices
yp.direct.gov.uk (Education and Learning)
www.apprenticeships.org.uk
www.sparksite.co.uk
 or download the App from the App store, search for Your Choices



Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) is key to making the right choices for you.

Here are some really helpful websites that you can visit...

All schools, colleges and training providers offer different choices. Make sure you check out all the options available to you so that you know what you want to do and where you can do it.

Try the following:

- log onto the Wiltshire website:
www.wiltshire.gov.uk/choices
- **yp.direct.gov.uk**
- log onto careers education advice:
www.careersbox.co.uk
www.icould.com
www.careerpilot.org.uk
- ask your careers teacher or careers adviser based in or who visits your school or college
- get in touch with a National Careers Service adviser at **<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>**
- speak to your teachers, lecturers or employers
- speak to people at home, parents/carers, brothers/sisters and other family members.

