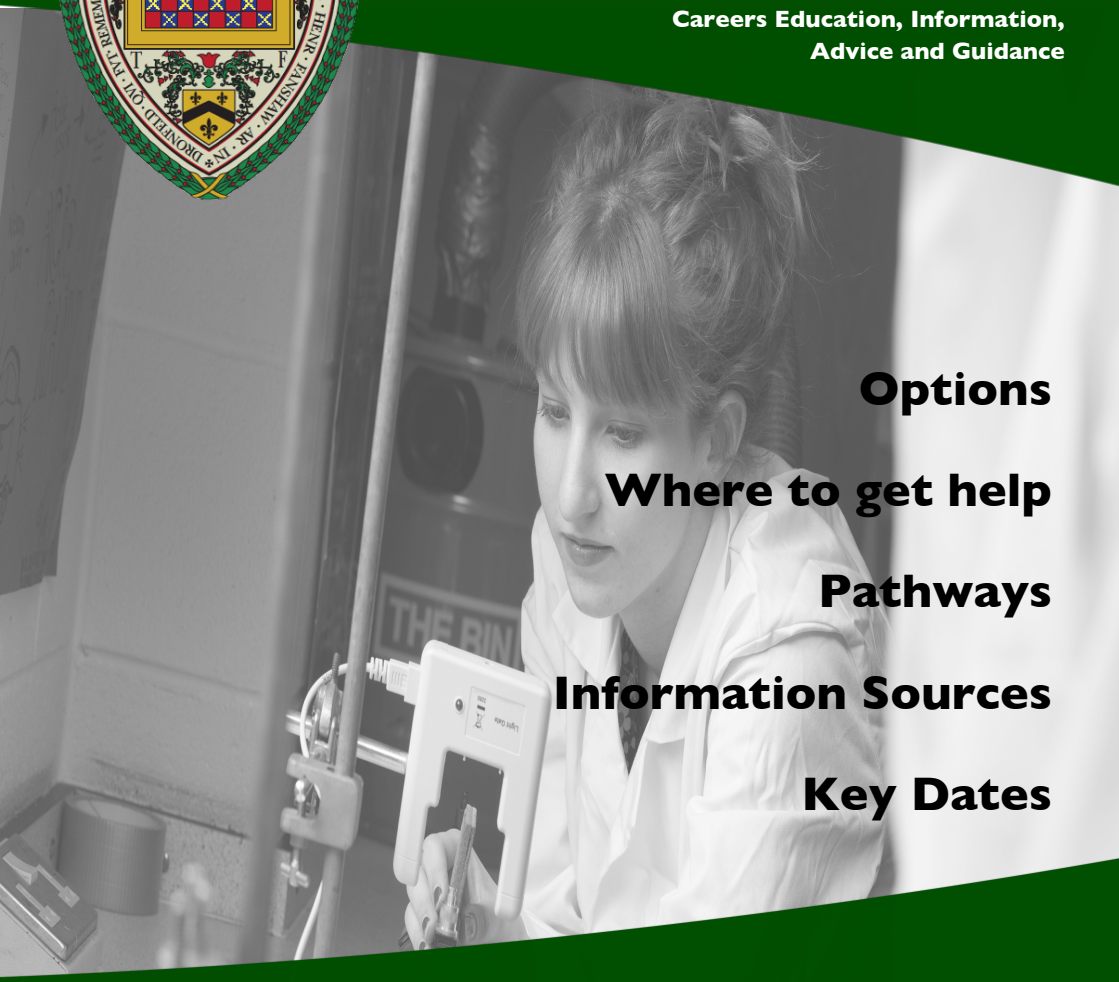
A Parent & Carers Guide to Careers

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance



Options

Where to get help

Pathways

Information Sources

Key Dates

CAREER MARK
Recognising Excellence in Careers, Employability and Enterprise
GOLD AWARD

2026 - 2027 edition

DRONFIELD HENRY FANSHAWE SCHOOL

Established 1579

Why is Careers preparation important?



It is never too early to consider your future, indeed, your options later may well be affected by the decisions that you make now. For example, if you aspire to complete a university course, then your entry will depend upon the right choices at GCSE and Sixth Form. The same is true of college and apprenticeship courses, which also have the ability to lead students on into Level 5 (degree level) study.

There is no such thing as the best pathway, but you must chose the best pathway for you. For example, for some students a sixth form A level course is the best option, whilst for others who wish to follow a vocational pathway, an apprenticeship or Level 3 study at a college may be best.

The best advice is to gather as much advice as you can. Consider all options based on the best advice, information and reflection.

There have never been so many options open to students, please make the best decision for you.

Careers Lessons







Students receive a full curriculum of Careers lessons from Year 7 to 13. These take place in formal lessons, drop down days, specialist input and cross-curriculum approaches:

- Enrichment day programmes
- Mentor time
- Careers convention and interview days
- Work experience
- STEM lessons
- Futures lessons – Sixth Form
- PSHE, Lifeskills

Our guest speaker programme supports the curriculum, allowing students to receive an adult based view from a range of external specialists. Also, the school has an open door policy on advice from external agencies and providers. For example Chesterfield College, Sheffield College and Apprenticeship providers attend school regularly for both lesson and lunchtime drop in sessions where possible.

Where can my child and I get help in school?

Independant, Impartial Advice

With years of experience, Progress Careers and our Careers team provides impartial and unbiased advice to students and parents concerning their career pathways. From universities, employment, training, apprenticeship opportunities, and further education pathways, students receive a wide breadth of information. All students have an entitlement to a careers interview.

School Digital Resources

The school has a state of the art careers website which is accessible from the main school website. The website includes current vacancies and a wide range of careers information links. We also publish the careers newsletter each month, focusing on key topics and advice. Our Twitter accounts are also very active, sharing key information points and advice.

School Staff & Mentors

All school staff are trained in supporting students with transition. This is supported by our investment in mentor support, where a minimum of two members of staff support students each mentor time. We also have a dedicated, skilled team of academic mentors whose role is to support students with academic achievement and successful transition.

The Careers Library

The Careers Library is based in our learning resource centre (LRC). The LRC is open before and after school, as well as throughout the school day. Staffed by trained librarians, careers advice is available to all students throughout the week. Advice is based on need and information is impartial and up to date.

Resources are extensive, both paper and digital. Reviews take place regularly to quantify all the information that we have available.

Careers Interviews

The school operates an impartial Careers Service. This partnership is unbiased and impartial, with careers advice being offered by school staff, and our colleagues at Progress Careers.

Students are invited for interview, but can also request support via: careers@dhfs.uk

Or via the links on the Careers Website Homepage www.dhfs.uk/careers.

Parents are welcome to attend the interview by arrangement.

Mr Pickles and the careers team also have a careers appointment slot at every parent & carers evening or open evening.

Year 11 Trial Interview Day

Do you remember being thrown in at the deep-end with your first job interview? We do, and so at Dronfield Henry Fanshawe School we are planning a Trial Interview day for Year 11 students.

Designed to allow students to experience the process from application form to interview, followed by feedback, students experience a real job interview by guests from our employment community. Many find the experience daunting at first, but highly valuable in gaining real life skills from employers who interview staff daily.

School Careers Website



We are very proud of our careers website which has been widely praised by OfSTED, the Local Authority, other schools, students and parents.

The website can be accessed from either the 'Parents' or 'Students' tab at the top of the main school website.

Covering a wide range of easily organised topic areas, you can access all of the help and guidance that your child needs in planning their pathways and career journey.

The website is impartial, and offers links to a wide range of local providers as well as our own Sixth Form. With this in mind it is an ideal way in supporting your child through the important decision making phases.

Our Careers Conventions

November 2025 & March 2026

Each year we hold two large careers conventions. These allow students to access a wide range of impartial careers advice from universities, employers, training providers, colleges and apprenticeships in industry.

Our event in March is designed for all families in our community to explore options at Key Stage 3, 4, 5 and beyond. These include college, apprenticeship and training opportunities as well as university and university finance.

Our full day event in November is aimed at all students, with universities, colleges, training providers, apprenticeship providers and industry representatives being present.

Parents from our partner primary schools are welcome to attend the evening event.

The "Baker Clause" & Access Statement

Access to college, technical and vocational information is also impartial, with a wide range of training and further education providers presenting to all Year 11 students in their careers classes. In addition, both local colleges and others from further afield attend our careers conventions in school.

In addition, notice boards around school and in the library publicise college options, and paper prospectuses are freely available in the library for students to take home.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships really suit some people's way of learning as they provide the chance to work for an employer, earn money and study for a qualification whilst gaining vocationally based skills and experience. Anyone living in England, over 16 years old and not in full-time education can consider an apprenticeship. What will I earn while I learn? This varies, but you must receive the appropriate national minimum wage. Is it a real job? Definitely! All apprentices should work for at least 30 hours a week on average. In total, over 150,000 employers are involved across the country at either intermediate, advanced and higher (degree) level. These vacancies exist in more than 170 industries and 1500 jobs. The variety is huge, ranging from advertising to environmental engineering and sciences. Will it lead on to other opportunities? According to government statistics, after completing the course successfully, 85% of apprentices stay in employment, with 64% staying with the same employer. Also, 32% of all former apprentices had received a promotion within 12 months, and 75% reported taking on more responsibility in their job. Employers have commented that in careers, qualified apprentices are 15% more employable than those with other qualifications.

What types of apprenticeship are there? There are three types of apprenticeship you can apply for depending on your current skills and qualifications:

1 - intermediate level apprenticeships
2 - advanced level apprenticeships
3 - higher apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are a valid choice after Year 11 and 13 for many students. We therefore allow open access to a wide range of apprenticeship and training providsers so that our students are fully informed of the full range of opportunities available to them. Our website and notice boards publicise vacancies, and students who are identified as being interested in such a pathway take part in a special forum supporting their applications.

Is an apprenticeship right for you?

Apprenticeships combine real work with training and study for a specific role. You'll learn new skills, gain experience and earn a salary too. Being an apprentice can be an exciting and rewarding career path. Before applying you should also consider that as an apprentice you'll have to balance a job with studying and your home life work under supervision and guidance, complete regular assessments, and usually train for one specific role.

What are the advantages of apprenticeships?

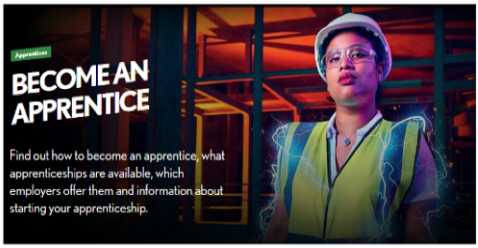
Open to everyone: apprenticeships aren't just for school leavers, they're for everyone.

To apply for an apprenticeship, you'll need to be:

16 or older, not in full-time education, living in England.
Earn as you learn: apprentices are employees too, which means you'll get a salary while gaining work experience. You'll be learning nationally recognised skills on the job and applying your new skills in a real work environment.

What are the disadvantages of apprenticeships?

Not suited to everyone: an apprenticeship may not be the right career move for you. If there's an apprenticeship you're interested in, remember to do your research before applying. This will help you understand what's expected of you and the realities of becoming an apprentice.



What is an apprenticeship?

Apprenticeships combine real work with training and study. Unlike college or university, you'll apply what you learn directly on the job, gaining hands-on experience and skills.

As an apprentice you will:

train for the workplace: gain skills directly relevant to your job
get hands-on experience: work on real tasks and projects
earn a salary with employee rights, spend at least 20% of your working hours training or studying, regularly evaluating your progress and finish with an end-point assessment.

Apprenticeships take 1 to 6 years to complete, depending on the the type of apprenticeship, the level you choose, and your previous experience.

T-LEVELS



Get ahead in your career

You'll spend 80% of your time in the classroom and 20% on a 45-day placement with an employer to give you the skills and knowledge companies look for.

EQUIVALENT TO 3 A LEVELS

T Levels are an alternative to A levels, apprenticeships and other 16 to 19 courses. Equivalent in size to 3 A levels, a T Level focuses on vocational skills and can help students into skilled employment, higher study or apprenticeships.

T Levels are a 2-year qualification designed to give you a head start towards the career you want.

The government has developed T Levels to deliver world-class technical education and give you a new choice after GCSEs.

A 45-DAY INDUSTRY PLACEMENT

Each T Level includes an in-depth industry placement that lasts at least 45 days. Students get valuable experience in the workplace; employers get early sight of the new talent in their industry.

80% CLASSROOM, 20% WORK

T Level students spend 80% of the course in their learning environment, gaining the skills that employers need. The other 20% is a meaningful industry placement, where they put these skills into action.

Agriculture, Land Management and Production, Animal care and Management, Business and Administration, Management and Administration, Construction, Building Services Engineering for Construction, Design, Surveying and Planning for Construction, Creative and Design, Craft and Design, Media, Broadcast and Production, Digital Business Services, Digital Production, Design and Development, Digital Support Services, Education and Early Years, Engineering and Manufacturing, Design and Development for Engineering and Manufacturing, Maintenance, Installation and Repair for Engineering and Manufacturing, Processing and Control, Science, Legal, Finance and Accounting, Sales, Marketing and Procurement.

Higher Technical Qualifications

Find out what Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) are, who they're for, and what and where you can study.

What are Higher Technical Qualifications? (HTQs)

HTQs are technical qualifications that have been developed by employers and awarding bodies, so you'll get the right training, knowledge, and skills to succeed in the workplace.
They are based on the same set of standards as apprenticeships and T Levels and have been approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education as meeting the occupational standards for the relevant sector.
There are many different types of HTQs, such as: higher national diplomas, higher national certificates, foundation degrees, and higher education diplomas.

Who are Higher Technical Qualifications for?

They're for students over 18 who want to study a subject to prepare them for skilled jobs, and also for adults looking to retrain or upskill.
They would suit you if you want a more practical, employer-led programme. Also remember, you could progress to further study and/or training.

Where can I study a Higher Technical Qualification?

Higher Technical Qualifications are mostly taught in the classroom, in further education colleges, universities, Institutes of Technology or independent training providers.

What subjects are available?

HTQ courses are currently being taught in the following: a variety of digital occupations, construction, design and build' health and science, business and administration, education and early years, engineering and manufacturing, legal, finance and accounting, agriculture, environmental & animal care, catering and hospitality, creative and design, care services, protective services, sales, marketing and procurement.

How do I find a course?

You can apply for HTQs directly through UCAS or visit the National Careers Service.

The Level Ladder

The Parents' Guide to
www.theparentsguideto.co.uk

Level	Qualification / educational route			
8	Doctorate (PhD)			NVQ 8
7	Masters degree (MA)			Degree apprenticeship / NVQ 5, 6, 7
6	Bachelors degree BA or BSc			
5	Foundation degree FdA or FdSc		Higher National Diploma (HND)	
4			Higher National Certificate (HNC)	Higher apprenticeship / NVQ 4
3	A levels Grades A-E	International Baccalaureate / T Levels	BTEC diploma BTEC certificate	Advanced apprenticeship / NVQ 3
2	GCSE Grades 4- 9 (C, B, A or A*)		BTEC first diploma	Intermediate apprenticeship / NVQ 2
1	GCSE Grades 1- 3 (D,E,F or G)		Foundation diploma / entry level qualifications	Traineeship / NVQ 1
	Academic route		Vocational route	Applied / work route



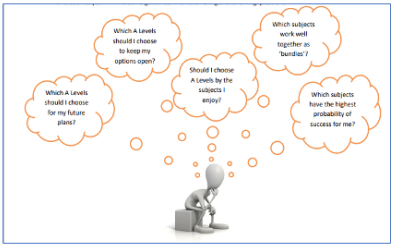
DHFS Sixth Form Study

A Level:
Art, Craft & Design, Biology, Business, Chemistry, Computer Science, Design & Technology - Design Engineering, Design & Technology - Fashion & Textiles, Design & Technology - Product Design, Drama & Theatre, English Language, English Literature, Film Studies, French, Geography, History, Mathematics, Mathematics – Further, Philosophy, Photography, Physical Education, Physics, Politics, Psychology, Sociology, Spanish.

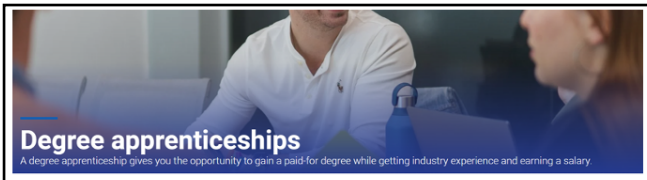
Vocational Qualifications (all Level 3):
Equivalent to 1 A Level BTEC L3 Extended Cert' in Applied Science, Level 3 Diploma in Criminology, Level 3 Diploma Food Science and Nutrition, BTEC L3 Extended Certificate in IT, BTEC L3 Extended Certificate in Music.

Other Qualifications:
AS Level only AS Level German, Core maths (Mathematical Studies), EPQ (Extended Project Qualification).

Enrichment Curriculum:
Young Enterprise, Duke of Edinburgh Award, Work experience, Buddy reading, Peer mentoring, Volunteering, School leadership.



Our expected entry requirements for AS/A Level are 5 x 9-5 GCSE grades including math's and English plus subject specific requirements. If you wish to study some subjects you will need to gain a grade 6 in the subject at GCSE Level. Some may ask for a grade 7.



Pros of a degree apprenticeship

- ✓ You'll get real-life experience working alongside your degree.
- ✓ Your degree is fully paid for, so there's no cost to you.
- ✓ You'll get paid a salary just like a normal employee.
- ✓ You'll get a head start on graduates entering into the workplace after study.

Cons of a degree apprenticeship

- × You'll need to balance working and studying at the same time.
- × You won't qualify for any student loans.
- × Apprentices don't always get the traditional 'university experience'.
- × The apprenticeship market is extremely competitive.



DANIELLE - DEGREE APPRENTICE AT IBM

When I started looking at my options, I hadn't even heard of a degree apprenticeship. As soon as I discovered them and started looking into them, I could immediately see the benefit of going into a real business environment, getting work experience and still gaining a qualification.

What are degree apprenticeships?

A degree apprenticeship enables you to gain a full undergraduate or master's degree while you work. Degree apprenticeships take three to six years to complete, depending on the course level.

You'll spend most of your time working and you'll also study part-time at university. For example, you might go to university one or two days per week, or in short blocks, such as a week at a time. Overall, you spend about 20% of your time studying vs. 80% of your time working.

Competitive universities & the Russell Group; what are they?

A common question. Russell Group universities and the competitive universities are the top twenty four universities in the country. Often referred to as 'Red Brick' or 'older established', these universities often specialise in research based degrees and are highly regarded by employers.

At DHFS we continually encourage students to aim high and apply for the top courses at the top universities. Aim high - could you be applying? Our reporting processes allow us to identify potential in our students from Year 7 onwards.

So what are the entry requirements? Minimum entry requirements can be as low as ABB at A Level, rising to a usual offer of AAB or AAA. The most highly regarded courses will ask for A*A*A*. An example of one such course would be studying physics with Professor Brian Cox at the University of Manchester.

- University of Birmingham
- University of Bristol
- University of Cambridge
- Cardiff University
- Durham University
- University of Edinburgh
- University of Exeter
- University of Glasgow
- Imperial College London
- King's College London
- University of Leeds
- University of Liverpool
- London School of Economics & Political Science
- University of Manchester
- Newcastle University
- University of Nottingham
- University of Oxford
- Queen Mary University of London
- Queen's University Belfast
- University of Sheffield
- University of Southampton
- University College London
- University of Warwick
- University of York

UCAS



University Application





I'm thinking about University in the future, help please?

So how do we support students who aspire to university? Firstly, our curriculum and assembly structure advises students on the application process and their options. Resources are widely available in the Resource Centre, on our dedicated website, and via open evenings and careers conventions. Our House Academic Mentors also support students in their UCAS and apprenticeship applications.

In addition, our independant careers advisors provide individual guidance based on student needs.

Finally, the Sixth Form team provide bespoke advice that is impartial and led by a students individual needs.

DRONFIELD
HENRY FANSHAWE
SCHOOL

Established 1579

Green Lane
Dronfield
Derbyshire
S18 2FZ
www.dhfs.uk
@DHFSupdate
@DHFS_careers