

Guidance for Year 11 students - What can I do to make this time count for me?

We understand that the current time may be an uncertain one for students who are unsure of next step in their education come September 2020. We have put together some tips and advice below to support students and parents to make the most of this time.

Now is a time when as young people you have an important choice to make: you can either maximise your opportunities or you can waste these weeks being unproductive. More than ever it is key to make yourself stand out from the crowd, develop your employability skills and show yourself to be a resilient and determined individual.

I am in Year 11; can I still apply to Sixth Form/College?

Yes, Sixth Forms and Colleges will still be accepting applications. You need to visit their websites and follow the application processes online. You may feel an apprenticeship is the best route for you, but it is a good idea to secure a college place as a back-up. You may find a one-year course is the most suitable option. The best option is just to get online, find out what is out there and contact the colleges to ask any questions you have. If you need help to complete an application form contact your school Careers Adviser who will then direct you to the best person to support you.

I have applied for an apprenticeship and been offered a place, but I am worried it may not be secure?

It is excellent news if you have been offered an apprenticeship, but you may fear that due to the economic impact of COVID-19 that your prospective employer may not be able to honour this offer. From our ongoing discussions with employers we are optimistic that most apprenticeship places will still be in place after lockdown is lifted and many employers will be keen to have an enthusiastic young workforce in place to bounce back from the impact, however these are uncertain times. Keep in contact with your apprenticeship provider, they will let you know if there are issues. You may need to be prepared to be flexible with regards locations and start dates as employers change their business models. If your apprenticeship provider does contact you to say they cannot offer the apprenticeship please contact the careers team so we can support you to find an alternative option. It is also worth reading below:

If am hoping for an apprenticeship but do not currently have an offer, what do I do?

You need to continue to regularly check the government apprenticeship website [apprenticeships.gov.uk](https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk) for vacancies. If you have businesses that you are interested in routinely check their websites, engage with any outreach work they do and where appropriate make yourself known to them by sending in your CV and a covering letter asking to be notified of any apprenticeships or work experience opportunities.

More than anything now is the time to get yourself ready to apply when the opportunities start to come up. Get your CV and covering letter polished to perfection so you are ready to be the first application on the pile! Many apprenticeships will require you to complete a group assessment day - visit the company websites and look to see if they have any practice tasks to complete. It may be that interviews take place over video conferencing as we all adapt to different ways of working, so try to get familiar with this forum of communication through attending webinars or mock interview opportunities.

Prepare for September: Whatever next step you choose you will need to be ready to learn again in September. Now is a good time to explore college websites, read around subjects and careers guides and really make sure you know what it is you want to study in September.

Free careers and online learning websites/resources

- **UEA Online Resource Portal** <https://www.uea.ac.uk/study/info-for/young-people/revision-skills> UEA have created a one-stop-shop resources portal, signposting you to a selection of resources to help you on your journey to success. The portal covers 4 subject areas;
 - Subject resources
 - Looking after you
 - Techniques and top tips
 - Thinking about the future

- **I Can Be A** website - <https://www.icanbea.org.uk/home-educating-schooling-resources-index/> – lots of profiles of local companies, on line quizzes and now with extensive links to careers and subject learning materials for use at home under the following headings:
 - [Careers Support](#)
 - [Live Lessons](#)
 - [Online Learning Programmes](#)
 - [General Learning Resources](#)
 - [STEM](#) (Science Technology Engineering & Maths)
 - [English](#)
 - [Geography](#)
 - [Art](#)
 - [Music](#)
 - [Languages](#)
- **Educational resources for learning at home** <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools/coronavirus-school-updates/educational-resources> - A selection of fun and educational activities to help children, young people and adults learn from home during the coronavirus outbreak. The resources have been hand-picked by teaching and learning advisers from Early Years right through to Post-16, and by Virtual Schools teams from Norfolk County Council and across the Eastern Region
- **A Level Preparation Resources for Year 11 Pupils** - *Bridging the gap between GCSE and A Level* <https://www.norwich-school.org.uk/school-life/remote-learning/departments-and-curriculum/> Norwich school have published a suite of remote learning guides designed to help current Year 11 pupils prepare for studying at A Level. These guides have been produced by Norwich School subject teachers to help Year 11 pupils make the transition to A Level study during a time when they would normally be preparing and taking GCSE exams. The materials have been produced for their own students but may be of use to young people in other schools intending to study A levels in September. The resources can all be accessed through the Norwich School website by clicking [here](#).
- **National Careers Service** – Skills Toolkit - free online courses, tools and resources to help you improve your digital and numeracy skills <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/find-a-course/the-skills-toolkit>
- **Help You Choose** www.helpyouchoose.org – a great site to research the options available in Norfolk’s sixth forms and colleges and with apprenticeships. Loads of good information and advice for young people
- **Amazing Apprenticeships** website www.amazingapprenticeships.com updated with lots of downloadable resources available to help you find out more about apprenticeships
- **National Apprenticeships service** <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship> - search for some of the apprenticeships available in your area
- **Young people’s Hub** www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/children-and-young-peoples-hub - Norfolk County Council (NCC) have developed a new Youth Hub section to their website to provide information and advice to children and young people in Norfolk.

And finally.... what can I do to make this time count for me?

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Volunteer: There are lots of opportunities for you to volunteer during this time to support both the local and national effort - this will broaden your experience and develop your resilience. Employers both now and in the future will also look very positively on young people who have demonstrated a positive social contribution at this time.

Temporary work: There are increasing needs for temporary workers locally in both the food sales industry but also in fruit and vegetable picking and packing. It may not seem that appealing and you may feel that fruit picking isn't going to advance your engineering skills - however it says a lot to employers! - you are hard-working, resilient, a team player! Don't underestimate the value of any form of employment on your CV. Look at the Employment Opportunities page on the New Anglia LEP website at <https://newanglia.co.uk/employment-opportunities/s>

At-home learning and personal projects: You may feel that you are unable to leave your home and need to shield for yourself or a family member, this is fine - if you cannot take up volunteering or temporary work opportunities try to develop yourself at home. Choose a subject area to read more in depth into, complete an online course, learn a language or how to edit videos online - the options for self-directed home learning are endless! It is very likely that when this is over employers will ask at interview "What did you do to develop as an individual during COVID-19 lockdown?". Make sure you have something positive to say.