

YOUTH SERVICE

What's Next?

2026 Provision Guide – Mid Essex

Employability & Skills Team

A guide to support a young person's next steps.

The purpose of this guide is to give you an overview of the options for post-16 provision in your local area. Delivery and availability of the opportunities listed may change.

Many of you will expect to achieve the grades needed and will be staying in your school sixth form, have secured a place at college, or have a start date agreed for an apprenticeship. If you do not have any firm plans in place, then please read on.

Planning

When considering your next steps, it can seem confusing as there are so many options to choose from. Whether you are looking at further education, apprenticeships, work or training, we recommend that you research thoroughly.

There are several websites listed in this resource which can help you to explore courses and careers. In addition, it is important to identify existing skills as well as your hobbies and interests to help you when considering your options.

You could also speak with school or college staff, careers advisers and family networks to help you to make a strong choice. Remember to have a backup plan.

Still unsure?

Where possible, speak with the Careers Adviser at your school or college for guidance on subject choices and career paths.

From Monday 29th June: If you are aged 16–18, do not have access to a school or college Careers Adviser, and do not have a firm plan for September, please get in touch.

Employability and Skills Team
0800 707 6384

KeepInContactTeam@essex.gov.uk

You may receive communications from our Keep In Contact Team, who will update records and offer support from our Employability and Skills Advisers.

Website: <https://youth.essex.gov.uk/young-people/education-employment-and-training-support/>

Extension to Child Benefit

If you are a school or college leaver, under 18, unemployed and do not have a course or training programme to start in September 2026, your parent/carer may be entitled to claim Extension to Child Benefit. There is a time limit in which you can register your claim. For more information and to apply for an extension please call:

HMRC Child Benefit General Enquiries on 0300 200 3100 or visit:

www.gov.uk/child-benefit-16-19

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College and Further Education options

If you have not already applied, then we suggest that you make applications quickly as some providers have deadlines early in the academic year. There are broadly two different types of college course:

Academic Courses (e.g. A levels/ International Baccalaureate)

Usually involves studying multiple subjects. This may provide increased progression options at the end of the course.

- Assessment is usually weighted towards exams with less emphasis on continuous assessment.
- Entry Criteria: Typically, applicants will be expected to achieve at least five GCSEs at grades 9 to 4. The specific requirements vary across schools and colleges.
- Some schools and Sixth Form Colleges may offer GCSE resit options for young people that have narrowly missed out on GCSE grades.

Vocational Courses (e.g. BTECs/T Levels/NVQ/CACHE)

Vocational courses are typically designed around a specific industry/occupation.

Courses usually range from Level 1 and go up to Level 3 and higher.

Vocational courses are an opportunity to specialise early in a subject that interests you.

It often means studying one main subject (some schools and colleges allow you to blend academic and vocational options).

If you have not achieved Grade 4 in GCSE Maths or English, you will be required to

complete these qualifications alongside your main course.

Sixth Form & College options for summer 2026

For more information about course availability, application procedures, open events and entry requirements, please contact the establishment directly.

School Sixth Forms

Beaulieu Park School

Telephone: 01245 943400

Website: www.beaulieuparkschool.com

Chelmer Valley High School, Chelmsford

Telephone: 01245 440232

Website:

www.chelmervalleyhighschool.co.uk

Chelmsford County High School for Girls

Telephone: 01245 352592

Website: www.cchs.co.uk

Great Baddow High School

Telephone: 01245 265821

Website: www.gbhs.co.uk

Hedingham School, Sible Hedingham

Telephone: 01787 460470

Website: www.hedingham.essex.sch.uk

King Edward VI Grammar School, Chelmsford

Telephone: 01245 353510

Website: www.kegs.org.uk

Lift Maltings, Witham

Telephone: 01376 512911

Website: www.liftmaltings.org

Moulsham High School, Chelmsford

Telephone: 01245 260101

Website: www.moulshamhigh.org

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Lift New Rickstones Academy, Witham

Telephone: 01376 515756

Website: www.liftnewrickstones.org

**Ormiston Rivers Academy,
Burnham on Crouch**

Telephone: 01621 782377

Website: www.ormistonriversacademy.co.uk

Sandon School, Chelmsford

Telephone: 01245 473611

Website: www.sandon.essex.sch.uk

St John Payne, Chelmsford

Telephone: 01245 256030

Website: www.sjp.essex.sch.uk

Tabor Academy, Braintree

Telephone: 01376 323701

Website: www.taboracademy.co.uk

The Boswells School, Chelmsford

Telephone: 01245 264451

Website: www.boswells-school.com

The Plume, Maldon

Telephone: 01621 854681

Website: www.plume.essex.sch.uk

**William De Ferrers School,
South Woodham Ferrers**

Telephone: 01245 326326

Website: www.wdf.school

Colleges & Sixth Form Colleges

Chelmsford College

Telephone: 01245 265611

Website: www.chelmsford.ac.uk

The Braintree Sixth Form College

Telephone: 01376 556300

Website: www.braintreesixthform.com

Colchester Institute

The College at Braintree

Telephone: 01206 712000

Website: www.colchester.ac.uk/about-us/campuses/braintree

Writtle College - ARU, near Chelmsford

Telephone: 01245 493131

Website: www.aru.ac.uk/writtle-college

Other Colleges close to Mid Essex

Suffolk Rural College (was Otley College)

Telephone: 01473 382200

Website: www.suffolk.ac.uk/course-categories/suffolk-rural

South Essex College

Basildon, Canvey, Southend and Thurrock

Telephone: 0345 52 12345

Website: www.southessex.ac.uk

The Colchester Sixth Form College

Telephone: 01206 500743/500700

Website: www.colchsfc.ac.uk

Apprenticeships

What is an Apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship gives you the opportunity to gain work experience, a qualification and earn a wage at the same time.

Apprenticeships are available from Level 2 (equivalent to GCSE 9-4) all the way up to Degree level in some occupational areas.

For current information on local vacancies and further support, please visit:

www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship

www.apprenticeships.gov.uk

essexopportunities.co.uk/apprenticeship-hub

Training Providers that frequently deliver apprenticeship opportunities for young people in the local area:

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ACL Essex County Council

Apprenticeships in Business Administration, Customer service and more.

www.aclessex.com/apprenticeships/

Debut Training Academy

Apprenticeships and funded training in Beauty with training centre/salons in Wickford, Brentwood and Stanford-Le-Hope.

www.debutacademy.com/

First Intuition

Apprenticeships in Accountancy, based in Chelmsford.

www.firstintuition.co.uk/apprenticeships

Halls of Ivy

Hairdressing and Beauty Apprenticeships.

www.hallsofivy.co.uk

Hit Training

Hospitality, Catering and Retail.

www.hittraining.co.uk

Ixion Holdings

Offers Apprenticeships in: Business, Construction, Customer Service, Digital Media and Marketing, Food Industry, IT, Retail, Education, Health and Social care. Careers and Employability.

www.ixionholdings.com

Leep Group

Apprenticeships in IT Support, Digital Marketing, Software Development and more.

www.leepgroup.com/training/apprenticeships

KEITS

Apprenticeships in equine, animal care, grounds person, horticulture, dog grooming and doggy day care.

www.keits.co.uk

Kleek

Hairdressing and Beauty.

www.kleekapprenticeships.co.uk

Multiverse

Business, Accountancy and Tech Apprenticeships in London.

www.multiverse.io

NHS Apprenticeships

With over 350 different NHS careers, there are hundreds of jobs which can be done through an apprenticeship.

www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/study-and-training/nhs-apprenticeships

QA Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships in IT Systems and Networking/Software and Website Development, Digital Skills, Business Admin.

www.qa.com/learners/become-an-apprentice

Get Set UK

Business Administration, Digital Marketing, HR and Teaching Assistant, Recruitment.

www.getsetuk.co.uk

Colleges that offer Apprenticeships

Chelmsford College

www.chelmsford.ac.uk/courses/apprenticeships.asp

Colchester Institute

www.colchester.ac.uk/apprenticeships

Cambridge Regional College

www.camre.ac.uk/apprenticeships/apprenticeship-job-vacancies/

Harlow College

www.harlow-college.ac.uk/study-options/apprenticeships

Writtle College - ARU, near Chelmsford

www.aru.ac.uk/study/college-courses/apprenticeships

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Foundation Learning Programmes

Foundation Learning providers offer English and Maths qualifications often alongside vocational elements to help improve your skills and get you ready to undertake an apprenticeship opportunity. This option often is usually accepted as approved training.

*Some Foundation Learning courses may have restrictions due to funding. Check with the provider when making your enquiries.

MPCT Military Academies - Colchester

www.mpct.co.uk

The Military Academy is a unique training college that helps 16+ year olds develop fitness, vocational qualifications and employability skills to help prepare for employment, including rewarding careers in the British Armed Forces.

Nova Training – Colchester

www.novatrainng.co.uk

Focussing on improving English and Maths up to level 1, 2 or GCSE if needed, this programme offers 16-18-year olds the opportunity to gain work experience, apprenticeship opportunities and support into employment.

For more information contact:

Mila Chepyha

mila.chepyha@novatrainng.co.uk

or telephone 01206 562657

TCHC – GAPS Programme – Basildon

www.tchc.net

GAPS is long term programme which includes functional skills in English and Maths with an opportunity to link into various vocational areas.

For more information contact:

basildon.gaps@tchc.net

or telephone 07562 210858

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Useful Websites

Below is a list of useful websites ranging from careers advice, skills assessments, finding work to volunteering.

Careers and Opportunities Research

www.essexopportunities.co.uk
<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/>
www.youthemployment.org.uk
www.icould.com
www.careerpilot.org.uk
<https://careers.startprofile.com>
www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/careers
<https://animalme.myworldofwork.co.uk>

Apprenticeships

www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship
www.apprenticeships.gov.uk
www.aclessex.com/apprentices
www.ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk
www.amazingapprenticeships.com
www.talentview.org
www.essexopportunities.co.uk/apprenticeship-hub

Jobs

www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk
www.gov.uk/find-a-job
www.indeed.co.uk
www.notgoingtouni.co.uk

Higher Education

www.ucas.com
www.prospects.ac.uk

Volunteering

www.vinspired.com
www.volunteersex.org
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/get-involved/get-involved/volunteering/>
www.doit.life/volunteer
<https://youth.essex.gov.uk/young-people/volunteering/>

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Local provision options, opportunities & support

<https://youth.essex.gov.uk/young-people/education-employment-and-training-support/>

Raising of the Participation Age

www.essex.gov.uk/education-and-training-for-young-people

Youth Service Padlet's

MID - [What's Next Guide](#)

MID - [Advice & Guidance](#)

MID - [Jobs & Apprenticeships](#)

Mental Health Support

The Southend, Essex and Thurrock Children's and Adolescent Mental Health Services (SET CAMHS) provides advice and support to children, young people and families who are in need of support with their emotional wellbeing or mental health difficulties. www.nelft.nhs.uk/set-camhs

Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm: call **0800 953 0222**

Email: set-camhs.referrals@nelft.nhs.uk

Urgent or out of hours: call **0800 995 1000**