

YOUTH SERVICE

What's Next?

2026 Provision Guide – South 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

Anglo European School, Ingatestone

Telephone: 01277 354018

Website: www.aesessex.co.uk

Basildon Academies

Telephone: 01268 552536

Website: www.basildonacademies.org.uk

Beauchamps High School, Wickford

Telephone: 01268 735466

Website: www.beauchamps.essex.sch.uk

Becket Keys, Brentwood

Telephone: 01277 286600

Website: www.becketkeys.org

Brentwood County High

Telephone: 01277 238900

Website: www.brentwood-county-high.osborne.coop/

Brentwood Ursuline Convent School

Telephone: 01277 277156

Website: www.brentwoodursuline.co.uk

Harris Academy Benfleet

(formerly The Appleton School)

Telephone: 01268 794215

Website: www.harrisbenfleet.org.uk

Harris Academy Billericay

(formerly The Billericay School)

Telephone: 01277 655191

Website: www.harrisbillericay.org.uk

Harris Academy Wickford

(formerly The Bromfords School)

Telephone: 01268 471201

Website: www.harriswickford.org.uk

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Lift Greensward, Hockley

Telephone: 01702 202571

Website: www.liftgreensward.org**Mayflower High School, Billericay**

Telephone: 01277 623171

Website: www.mayflowerhigh.essex.sch.uk**Shenfield High School**

Telephone: 01277 219131

Website: www.shenfield.essex.sch.uk**St Martins School, Hutton**

Telephone: 01277 238300

Website: www.st-martins.essex.sch.uk**The FitzWimarc School, Rayleigh**

Telephone: 01268 743884

Website: www.fitzwimarc.com**The King Edmund School, Rochford**

Telephone: 01702 545771

Website: www.kes.essex.sch.uk**The King John School, Benfleet**

Telephone: 01702 558284

Website: www.thekjs.essex.sch.uk**The Swayne Park School, Rayleigh**

Telephone: 01268 784721

Website: www.sweynepark.com

Colleges & Sixth Form Colleges

South Essex College**Basildon Campus:** Centre for Digital Technologies.**Luckyn Lane Campus (Basildon):**

Engineering, Construction, Building Services and Transport.

Southend Campus: South City College.**Stephenson Road (Southend):**

Centre for Advanced Technologies.

Thurrock Campus: Construction, Engineering, Media, Creative Arts, Childcare, Health and Social Care, IT, Hairdressing and Beauty.

Telephone: 0345 52 12345

Email: learning@southessex.ac.ukWebsite: www.southessex.ac.uk**USP College****Unified SEEVIC and Palmers College****Benfleet/Grays/Canvey**Telephone: **SEEVIC** 01268 756111Telephone: **Palmers** 01375 370121Telephone: **XTEND** 01268 882688Email: info@uspcollege.ac.ukWebsite: www.uspcollege.ac.uk

Other Colleges close to South Essex

Barking and Dagenham College, Romford

Telephone: 020 8090 3020

Website:

www.barkingdagenhamcollege.ac.uk**Building Crafts College**

Telephone: 0208 522 1705

Website: www.thebcc.ac.uk**Capel Manor College, Enfield**

Telephone: 0208 8778 5572

Website: www.capel.ac.uk**Chelmsford College**

Telephone: 01245 293170

Website: www.chelmsford.ac.uk**Colchester Institute,
Colchester and Braintree**

Telephone: 01206 712000

Website: www.colchester.ac.uk**New City College,****Havering Sixth Form Campus Hornchurch**

Telephone: 0330 135 9000

Website: www.ncclondon.ac.uk/havering-sixth-form-campus**The Colchester Sixth Form College**

Telephone: 01206 500723 / 500700

Website: www.colchsfc.ac.uk**Writtle College - ARU, near Chelmsford**

Telephone: 01245 493131

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

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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:

ACL Essex County Council

Apprenticeships in Business Administration, Customer service and more.

www.aclessex.com/apprenticeships/

Central Training

Hairdressing, Barbering, Retail & Customer Service, Digital Marketing, Teaching Assistant and Business Administration.

www.centraltraininggroup.com

Crown Vocational Training

Business Administration, Customer Service, Estate Agency, Lettings and Property Management, Learning and Development and Retail.

www.crownvocationaltraining.co.uk/apprenticeships/

Debut Training Academy

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

www.debutacademy.com

First Intuition

Apprenticeships in Accountancy, based in Chelmsford.

www.firstintuition.co.uk/apprenticeships

Hair Pro 1

NVQ courses in Hairdressing, barbering and beauty.

<https://www.hairpro1.co.uk/>

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 and Traineeships in Business, Construction, Customer Service, Digital Media, and Marketing.

www.ixionholdings.com

JET: Hairdressing

www.j-ettraining.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.

<https://keits.co.uk/>

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Kleek

Hairdressing and Beauty.

www.kleekapprenticeships.co.uk/

Multiverse

Business, Accountancy and Tech
Apprenticeships in London.

www.multiverse.io/en-GB

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

Quest Training

Apprenticeships in a number of sectors across Romford, Harrold Wood, Colchester and Clacton.

www.questfortraining.com

Get Set UK

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

www.getsetuk.co.uk

VTs

Specialising in Early Years, Teaching Assistant and Healthcare apprenticeships.

www.vts.ac.uk/information-for-apprentices

Colleges that offer Apprenticeships

Barking and Dagenham College

<https://barkingdagenhamcollege.ac.uk/financial/courses-for-me/apprenticeships>

Building Crafts College, Stratford

<https://thebcc.ac.uk/>

Capel Manor

<https://www.capel.ac.uk/apprenticeships/>

Chelmsford College

<https://www.chelmsford.ac.uk/courses/apprenticeships.asp>

Colchester Institute

<https://www.colchester.ac.uk/apprenticeships/>

New City College

www.ncclondon.ac.uk/apprenticeships

South Essex College

www.southessex.ac.uk/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.

Central Training Group

www.centraltraininggroup.com

Various study programmes – please see website for current offer.

For more information, please email:

info@centraltraininggroup.com

or telephone: 0800 783 2901

Debut Training Academy

www.debutacademy.com

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

Southend Community College

www.southend-adult.ac.uk

Offering 16-19 Study Programmes that intend to prepare you for employment and further qualifications, including English and Maths. In-year enrolments.

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

Bowers Croft: Construction

Southgate House: Business and Retail, Health and Social Care, Nail and Beauty

For more information contact:

basildon.gaps@tchc.net

Telephone: **Southgate House** 01268 203841

Bowers Croft: 01268 103844

Youthbuild

www.essexyouthbuild.co.uk

Construction based courses up to Level 1 in Chelmsford. They also offer a CSCS course and test which is required to work on construction sites.

For more information contact:

admin@essexyouthbuild.co.uk

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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/>

This Guide was produced by the Essex County Council Employability & Skills Team. All information was correct as of April 2026.

Employability and Skills Team

Local provision options, opportunities & support www.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

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

SOUTH - [Job & Apprenticeship Board](#)

SOUTH - [Advice & Guidance](#)

Mental Health Support

The Southend, Essex and Thurrock Children's and Adolescent Mental Health Services (SET CAMHS) provide 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 **111** and press option 2 to speak to a mental health professional.

Vita Health Group

In partnership with the NHS, Vita Health Group offer talking therapies support for adults 16-years and over, who are registered with a Basildon and Brentwood GP.

www.vitahealthgroup.co.uk/

For self-referral call: **01268 977171**

Mon-Thu, 8am-8pm and Fri 8am-5pm