



**Soham Village College**

**Year 11**

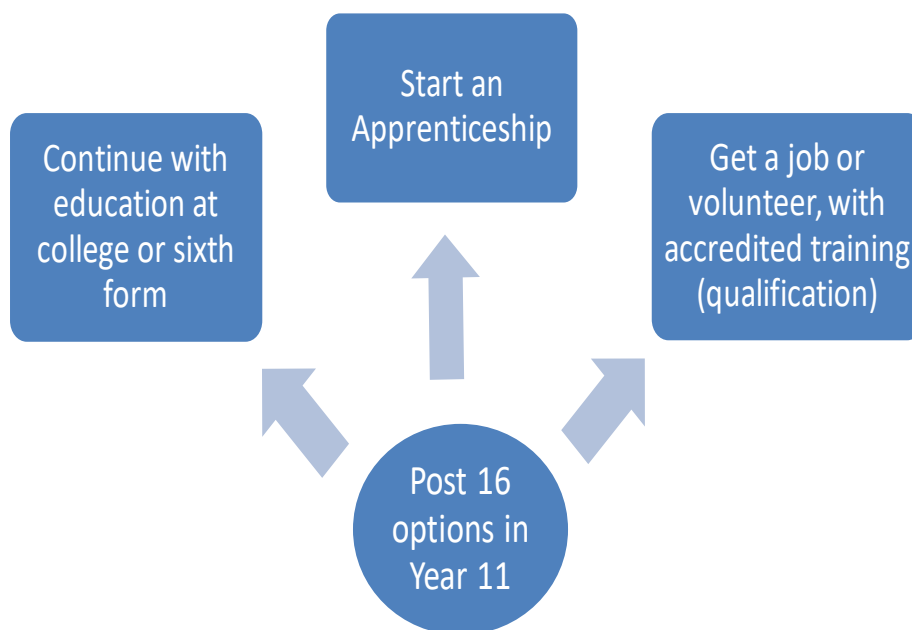
**Post 16 Information Guide**

[www.sohamvc.org](http://www.sohamvc.org)



## Options

Students are required to remain in education or employment with training until they turn 18.



## Research

The key to students making successful decisions about their future is **RESEARCH**. This can be independent, supported, or a combination of both. There are many sources of information available - online, written, tutors and careers staff, Post 16 centres.

A good starting point are the Post 16 centres websites and their digital prospectuses which show details of each course or subject, including entry requirements. Other useful sources can be found at the end of this guide.

Careers department staff and tutors are always available to talk through options and plans with students.

## Examples of qualifications available at the different levels

Qualification Level	Academic qualifications	Vocational qualifications (general & specific)	Apprenticeships (work combined with training & a qualification)
<b>Level 8</b>	PhD	Diploma	-
<b>Level 7</b>	Masters Degree	Diploma	Degree Apprenticeship
<b>Level 6</b>	Bachelors Degree	Diploma	Degree Apprenticeship
<b>Level 5</b>	Degree – yr 2	-HND (Higher National Diploma) -Foundation Degree -Level 5 Diploma	
<b>Level 4</b>	Degree – yr 1	HNC (Higher National Certificate)	Higher Apprenticeship
<b>Level 3</b>	-A levels -IB (International Baccalaureate) -T Levels	-Extended Certificate -Diploma -Extended Diploma	Advanced Apprenticeship
<b>Level 2</b>	GCSEs (4-5 subjects at grades 4-9 inc. English & Maths)	Level 2 Diploma (eg BTEC, City & Guilds)	Intermediate Apprenticeship
<b>Level 1</b>	GCSE (some grades 1-3)	Level 1 Diploma (eg BTEC, City & Guilds)	Traineeship (preparation for apprenticeship)
<b>Entry level</b>	Working towards GCSE Entry Level Certificate	-	-

**NB** After GCSEs it is only possible to move directly onto courses and training up to Level 3. In order to take any qualifications at Level 4 or higher, students need to be at least 18 and have a Level 3 qualification.

# What are A Levels??



- Focused on academic subjects with end of year exams
- Some subjects match what you can study at GCSE, others may be new
- 2 year course
- Usually take 3 A levels, or 4 if you feel you can cope with the work
- Usually need at least 5 GCSEs at grades 4-9
- Highly valued by employers and universities

- Colleges that offer A Levels:

Abbeygate  
CAST  
Hills Road  
The Oakes

Bishop Laney  
Chesterton  
Long Road  
The Maths School

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# What are vocational qualifications?



- Help you learn in a practical way about a specific job area
- A mix of theory and practical learning – so little or no exams
- Ideal if you have an idea of what career/trade you'd like to work in
- Can involve work placements
- You can study at Level 1, 2, or 3 depending on your GCSE grades
- Also known as BTECs, diplomas or certificates
- Highly valued by employers and universities

- Colleges that offer vocational qualifications:

Bishop Laney  
College of West Anglia  
The Oakes

Cambridge Regional College  
Long Road  
West Suffolk College

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# T Levels



- New industry-specific vocational qualification
  - 2 year course
  - 1 T Level = 3 A levels or Level 3 diploma
  - In-depth industry placement, minimum 45 days
  - Focuses on getting you into skilled employment or apprenticeship
  - Covers many of the popular subject areas
- Colleges that offer T Levels:
- Cambs Academy Science & Tech
  - Cambridge Regional College
  - West Suffolk College

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# International Baccalaureate



GROUP	OPTIONS – DIPLOMA PROGRAMME				
1. Language & Literature	English Language and Literature		English Literature	Literature & Performance	
2. Language Acquisition	French	Ab initio Italian			
	German	Ab initio Spanish			
	Spanish	Ab initio Mandarin			
3. Individuals and Societies	History	Geography	Psychology		
	Economics	Philosophy	Business		
4. Sciences	Biology	Chemistry	Physics		
	Computing	Sports Sciences	Environmental Systems and Societies		
5. Maths	Maths: Analysis and Approaches				
	Maths: Application and Interpretations				
6. Free Choice	Spanish	French	Biology	Chemistry	Physics
	Film	Music	Visual Arts	Dance	Politics
	History	Business	Psychology		

## Impington



A Career-related IB programme is also available, in which students choose either the Sport, Performing Arts, or Health and Social Care BTEC, and then select 2 subjects from Groups 1, 3, 4 and 6

# MyChoice16

The online college application portal

[www.mychoice16.co.uk](http://www.mychoice16.co.uk)

- Each student has their own secure log-in details to access to their profile and application.
- Students can access their on-line profile at anytime, anywhere. Parents are encouraged to provide support and show interest in the progress of the application.
- Students will be shown how to log in and complete their application. This will include their personal statement which is a key part.
- Tutors will complete a reference for each student, focusing on staff and student's relationships, learning attitude, behaviour, attendance and punctuality. This will relate to students' time in both Yr 10 and Yr 11.
- For Post 16 centres outside of Cambridgeshire (West Suffolk College, Abbeygate Sixth Form College) applications are direct via their own websites.
- Students are advised to make at least 2 applications so they have a back-up – either 2 different courses at the same college, or for 2 or more different colleges (**to break the myth, 3 choices are not compulsory**)
- Students can hold more than 1 offer and make a final decision after results day. Colleges realise and expect this to happen.
- It is the students' responsibility to submit their own application by the given deadline.

[December 9<sup>th</sup> 2025 –](#)

**MyChoice16 APPLICATION DEADLINE**

# How to Write Your Personal Statement

It should be around one A4 page. This is your opportunity to tell colleges more about you. Just like in GCSE transactional writing, you should be writing a minimum of 5 paragraphs.

## What Should I Include?

**1) Introduction**— This should be a couple of sentences saying where you are studying now, what you are applying for and maybe a sentence on what your goals are and your personality. You can expand on them later. Don't mention your predicted grades as these appear elsewhere in your application. Explain what you would like to study, and why. Be passionate and enthusiastic. Talk about what inspires you and where you see yourself going. Even if you're not sure, show you've considered it and have some thoughts about your future.

**2) Involvement in school life** — Give some examples of what else do you do other than your subjects.

This is something that can be truly individual. You probably have more than one interest, hobby or passion. Think carefully about what it says about you, in relation to your personality and what you want to study. This can help you decide what to mention and what isn't relevant.

- Inside or outside school, what responsibilities do you have?
- Mention any sports, music or drama awards, Duke of Edinburgh etc
- Talk about something in the college prospectus that you would love to get involved with.

**3) Outside of school**— This is your opportunity to show that you are a well-rounded individual. For each of these activities, you must explain what it has taught you. For example:

- Voluntary work or charity fundraising.
- If you've had a job, provide details about the role
- Involvement in sports clubs/arts/other groups such as Air Cadets or Scouts
- Hobbies/interests

**4) Personal Qualities**—Consider what you are like as a person. Talk about your strengths. Be honest, and be positive.

**5) Conclusion**—Say you're looking forward to studying your subject/s at a higher level. Overall, you want to leave the person reading your statement thinking that you are someone they'd love to have at their sixth form or college.

## College preferences

Some of the colleges have tight rules on where students should place them within their MyChoice application. Please ensure your child is aware of these specific requirements

<b>COLLEGE</b>	<b>PREFERENCE</b>
<b>Hills Road</b>	<b>Must be 1<sup>st</sup> choice, can be 2<sup>nd</sup> if also applying to a Cambs sixth form linked to a secondary school (Bishop Laney, Oakes, Chesterton, CAST, Impington)</b>  <b>Students should include 2 back up A level subjects (so 5 subjects in total) – this allows the college to offer a guidance meeting to consider back up options if a student doesn't meet acceptance criteria for their first choice A level</b>
<b>Oakes</b>	<b>Best advice is to place 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> choice. If 3<sup>rd</sup> choice, guidance meeting won't be offered in first wave</b>
<b>CAST</b>	<b>Best advice is to place 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> choice. If 3<sup>rd</sup> choice, guidance meeting won't be offered in first wave</b>
<b>CRC</b>	<b>Can apply for more than 1 course but will be invited for guidance meetings in order of preference</b>
<b>West Suffolk College</b>	<b>Can apply for more than 1 course but will be invited for guidance meetings in order of preference</b>

# Post 16 Open evenings for 2026 entry

## AUTUMN 2025/SPRING 2026

COLLEGE	TASTER DAYS	OPEN DAY/EVENING
Abbeygate Sixth Form	24 <sup>th</sup> June 9.45am-12noon	7 <sup>th</sup> Oct 5-7.30pm 15 <sup>th</sup> Nov 9.30am-12.30pm 28 <sup>th</sup> Jan 5-7.30pm <a href="https://www.abbeygatesfc.ac.uk/news-dates/open-events">https://www.abbeygatesfc.ac.uk/news-dates/open-events</a>
Bishop Laney Sixth Form	20 <sup>th</sup> June	23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct 6-8.30pm <a href="https://www.elycollege.com/page/?title=Sixth+Form&amp;pid=10">https://www.elycollege.com/page/?title=Sixth+Form&amp;pid=10</a>
Cambridge Regional College (Cambridge Campus)	17 <sup>th</sup> June 9.15am-2pm	1 <sup>st</sup> July 4.30-7pm 22 <sup>nd</sup> Oct 4.30-7pm 11 <sup>th</sup> Nov 6.30-7.30pm (Apprenticeship info evening) 15 <sup>th</sup> Nov 9.30am-12.30pm 24 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2026 10am-12.30pm 3 <sup>rd</sup> Mar 2026 4-6pm Apprenticeship, Jobs & Careers Fair 23 <sup>rd</sup> Apr 2026 4.30-7pm 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2026 4.30-7.30pm <a href="https://www.camre.ac.uk/about/events/open-days-2/">https://www.camre.ac.uk/about/events/open-days-2/</a>
CAST	No Taster Day held	2 <sup>nd</sup> July 5-7.30pm 6 <sup>th</sup> Nov 5-7.30pm <a href="https://www.cambridgeast.org.uk/sixth-form">https://www.cambridgeast.org.uk/sixth-form</a>
Chesterton College Sixth form	24 <sup>th</sup> June 9.30am-12pm	21 <sup>st</sup> Oct 6-8pm <a href="https://www.eventbrite.com/e/chesterton-sixth-form-open-evening-tuesday-21st-october-2025-tickets-1366468527149?aff=oddtcreator">https://www.eventbrite.com/e/chesterton-sixth-form-open-evening-tuesday-21st-october-2025-tickets-1366468527149?aff=oddtcreator</a>
College of West Anglia (Milton campus)	26 <sup>th</sup> June 10am-2pm	23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct 4.30-7.30pm 29 <sup>th</sup> Nov 9am-12.30pm 1 <sup>st</sup> Apr 2026 4.30-7.30pm <a href="https://cwa.ac.uk/about/open-days">https://cwa.ac.uk/about/open-days</a>
Hills Road Sixth Form College	No Taster Day held	5 <sup>th</sup> July 10am-4pm 7 <sup>th</sup> July 5-8pm (registration from 14 April 2025) <a href="https://www.hillsroad.ac.uk/sixthform/how-to-apply/open-events">https://www.hillsroad.ac.uk/sixthform/how-to-apply/open-events</a>
Impington	10 <sup>th</sup> July	22 <sup>nd</sup> Oct 5-7.30pm <a href="https://www.impingtoninternational.org.uk/">https://www.impingtoninternational.org.uk/</a>
Long Road Sixth Form College	No Taster Day held	2 <sup>nd</sup> July 5-9pm 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 5-9pm (registration in Spring 2025) <a href="https://www.longroad.ac.uk/page/?title=Open+Evenings&amp;pid=165">https://www.longroad.ac.uk/page/?title=Open+Evenings&amp;pid=165</a>
The Cambridge Maths School	No Taster Day held	16 Oct 3.30-8pm <a href="https://cms.tela.org.uk/">https://cms.tela.org.uk/</a>
The Oakes	25 <sup>th</sup> June	21 <sup>st</sup> Oct 6-8pm- no booking required <a href="https://oakescc.org/">https://oakescc.org/</a>
West Suffolk College	26 <sup>th</sup> June 9.45am-12noon	1 <sup>st</sup> Oct 5.30-7.30pm 22 <sup>nd</sup> Nov 9.30am-12.30pm 11 <sup>th</sup> Feb 5.30-7.30pm <a href="https://www.wsc.ac.uk/about-the-college/open-events">https://www.wsc.ac.uk/about-the-college/open-events</a>

(updated 4/9/25)

**PLEASE CONTINUE TO CHECK EACH COLLEGE'S WEBSITE FOR UPDATES**

**MOST OPEN DAYS REQUIRE REGISTRATION VIA WEBSITE OR LINK**

**TASTER DAY DETAILS TO BE SENT OUT WHEN DETAILS RECEIVED FROM COLLEGES**

**PLEASE KEEP CHECKING COLLEGE WEBSITES FOR UPDATES & EVENT REGISTRATION DETAILS**

# KEY DATES

## 2025

Sept onwards – 1-2-1 career guidance meetings continue

Sept/Oct – Post 16 college virtual presentations during tutor time

Oct 2<sup>nd</sup> – Post 16 Parents Information evening

Oct 20<sup>th</sup> – College application day: Introduction to MyChoice16, personal statement workshops, college and course research

Oct onwards – Post 16 college Open evenings (see dates)

Nov – GCSE mock exams

Dec 9<sup>th</sup> – **MyChoice16 applications – student submission deadline**

## 2026

Jan onwards – Post 16 college guidance meetings (some may take place before Christmas ie West Suffolk College)

April – Offers made (usually within 4-6 wks of interview)

May - June – GCSE exams

August 20<sup>th</sup> – GCSE results out

End Aug/start Sept – Post 16 college enrolment days -

**Do not book holidays over this period**

Early September – Induction days start at Post 16 colleges

# Transport

- How to get to college is one part of the application process that is often forgotten, or not fully appreciated, by students.
- It is important that this is considered early in the process, as there are options for each college but they do take time to gather all the information such as routes and costs.
- Most colleges have transport information on their websites so look at what they offer or suggest – some have bespoke buses, others recommend train and public bus routes.

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**TIGER**

## What does a Careers Adviser do?

- Meets with students one-to-one or in small groups to discuss their career or education options
  - Identifies skills gaps and how to recognize opportunities to fill them
- Helps students identify and consider the range of choices available to them
  - Helps students develop their own careers management skills
  - Draws up action plans
- Discusses with students how to overcome any barriers to reaching their goals



- **1-2-1 meetings are available for Yr11 students before you make your college application this term**
- **They will help you with your decision-making, and also possibly give you alternative options**
- **Email [janderson@soham-college.org.uk](mailto:janderson@soham-college.org.uk) NOW to arrange your meeting!!**

## Key messages to students

- Research, Research, Research.....
- Ask questions whenever possible – develop a curious mind
- Stay calm about the process, and take in all the support opportunities available
- Apply to more than 1 college, or at least 2 courses at same college. You can accept and hold more than 1 offer until GCSE results day
- Be aware of college choice order rules ie Hills Road must be 1<sup>st</sup> choice

## Don't end up saying this in May....

*'I wish I had more time'*

*'I wish I had asked more questions'*

*'I wish I had started earlier'*

## Useful websites

College Applications:

<https://www.mychoice16.co.uk/>

Apprenticeship Advice:

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>

Careers advice and guidance:

<https://www.sohamvc.org/post16careers>

<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/>

<https://www.careerpilot.org.uk/>

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

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

## Other support available at SVC

‘Careers Section’ in the Library

Tutors and Subject Teachers

Mr Nick Oakhill, Careers Guidance Manager

[noakhill@soham-college.org.uk](mailto:noakhill@soham-college.org.uk)

Mrs Julie Anderson, Careers Advisor

[janderson@soham-college.org.uk](mailto:janderson@soham-college.org.uk)



@SVC\_Careers

