



Careers Education and Guidance

Updated August 2025



Careers at Ashcroft Technology Academy

It is important to the Academy that students are equipped with the skills, the knowledge and the confidence they require to make the right career choices. All students will be prepared for their transition into adult life. At ATA we link learning to the world of work and we enable our students to succeed by fostering in them a sense of ambition and confidence.

Post 16 Options

- **A Levels** - Level 3 qualifications which use exam-based assessments. Students choose 3 subjects to study at this level.
- **International Baccalaureate** - Level 3 internationally recognised qualification with core modules and elective modules.
- **BTEC** - Level 1, 2 or 3 qualifications which are assessed through a portfolio of work and terminal exam. Are BTEC's right for you? [What are Btecs? A quick guide to Btec qualifications - The Uni Guide](#)
- **Apprenticeship** - Intermediate (Level 2); Advanced (Level 3); or Higher (Level 4 and above). Usually, paid employment for four or five days per week and study towards a qualification through flexible or online learning.
- **Traineeship** - A scheme which helps young people gain work skills before they move onto an apprenticeship or a job.
- **Work with training** – Working for an employer, and the employer must allow you time to be able to study an accredited course (this can be flexible e.g. evenings, weekends, distance learning) for a minimum of 280 hours per calendar year.
- **T Levels** - Equivalent in size to 2 A levels and focuses on vocational skills that can help students into skilled employment, higher study or apprenticeships. Includes an industry placement of 45+ days. 80% classwork and 20% work. [T Levels | The Next Level Qualification](#)

Careers Rationale

Our aims are to:

- Improve the labour market relevance of learning
- Develop a whole school approach to delivering high quality careers guidance and a strong careers curriculum.

Vision and Purpose:

London's diverse, entrepreneurial and fast-changing economy offers young people a wide range of opportunities—but also significant challenges. To thrive, young Londoners must be equipped from an early age with the knowledge, skills, experiences and qualifications to navigate a complex and competitive labour market. They are not only competing with their peers across the UK, but with a global workforce shaped by rapid technological, environmental and economic change.

High-quality, embedded careers education is therefore essential. In line with the Gatsby Benchmarks and DfE statutory guidance, our school is committed to delivering a stable, progressive careers programme that:

1. Provides personalised, impartial careers guidance from qualified professionals (Benchmark 8)
2. Embeds careers learning across the curriculum (Benchmark 4)
3. Offers meaningful encounters with employers, workplaces, and further and higher education providers (Benchmarks 5, 6 & 7)
4. Equips pupils with up-to-date labour market information (Benchmark 2)
5. Supports students to make informed, ambitious decisions at key transition points (Benchmark 3)
6. Provides targeted support for students with SEND and disadvantaged backgrounds, ensuring equality of access

This work supports students' personal development by building their character, resilience, and readiness for life beyond school. It also links closely with employability skills, destinations outcomes, and preparation for modern working life.

ATA is committed to ensuring that all students are well prepared for their future careers through a combination of:

- A robust culture of excellent behaviour and attendance, which we recognise as foundations for success
- A whole-school ethos of ambition, aspiration and hard work, supported by high expectations
- A careers programme that begins in Year 7 and builds through to Year 13, giving students repeated and age-appropriate opportunities to engage with careers learning, employer encounters, and personal reflection

We explicitly promote the link between excellent attendance, positive behaviour, academic achievement, and career success, helping students understand how their daily decisions influence their long-term outcomes.

We recognise that preparing students for the future is a shared responsibility. Our approach is collaborative, involving families, educators, employers, and training providers. Together, we work to develop confident, informed and capable young people, fully prepared to take their place in London's future workforce and beyond.

To search and apply for courses:

To help you search for local colleges, you can use:

National Careers Service [Course Directory](#)

For a specialist Further Education College, [Natspec](#) has a directory of courses for students with learning difficulties or disabilities.

Information for Parents and Carers: Supporting your child through the process

To help you support your child in their search for local colleges, 6th forms, apprenticeships, or work with training.

UCAS Progress have developed a [page for parents](#) supporting their child through the process of applying for their post-16 education or employment.

Development priorities

ATA is committed to delivering careers education in line with the eight Gatsby benchmarks and we are working towards Quality in Careers Standard/ Investors in Careers Award.

ATA is fully committed to the development of careers provision and regularly checks to ensure we are focusing on the correct priorities.

- All Heads of Year are trained to deliver careers assemblies and to support students with front line advice and guidance.
- ICAS mentors and SEN TAs are trained to deliver career-related advice and guidance to their mentees.
- Develop and implement a robust CPSE careers programme in Years 7 to 11.
- Review and upgrade the Post-16 HEG programme.
- Engage employers and parents to speak to students on the subject of careers and the importance of subject choice when considering future careers.
- Publish programme of careers provision on the Academy website with our named careers advisor.
- Develop a system for recording achievement and progress of all students in relation to their career plans.
- Ensuring all students have access to expert careers guidance by the age of 16 and an opportunity for a further individual interview by the age of 17.
- Improving the evaluation of the effectiveness of the careers programme through tracking outcomes on progress, subject choice and destinations.
- Raise the profile of our careers work with parents through ensuring careers staff attend parents' evenings for students in Years 9/10/11.
- Enhancing curriculum links to careers in Maths and Science.

Recognising National and Local trends and Expectations

London is a global city with an economy larger than many of the other member states of the EU¹. This provides many opportunities for our students but also big challenges. They are competing for jobs not just with each other but with people from across the UK and much of the rest of the world. The London workforce is typically better qualified and better paid than workers in the rest of the UK². It is also more entrepreneurial, with higher levels of self-employment.

Our students' attainment in 2024 places us in the top 5 state secondary schools in the UK. Many of our students come from deprived backgrounds; nevertheless, they achieve outstanding outcomes, they leave confident, and they are therefore well placed to engage with post 16 study of their choosing or an apprenticeship programme.

Apprenticeship participation in London remains below the national average: in 2023/24 there were around **6.1 apprenticeship starts per 1,000** working-age residents in London, compared with **9.4 per 1,000 across England** as a whole.

Recent national "destination" data for 2023/24 shows that **7.4%** of 16–18-year-old school and college leavers in England sustained an apprenticeship destination after post-16 studies.

However, in London — and by extension in boroughs such as Wandsworth — apprenticeship take-up among younger people appears to have fallen: much apprenticeship growth is now concentrated among older entrants (aged 25 and over) rather than school-leavers.

[Destinations of key stage 4 and 5 students: 2024 - GOV.UK](#)

ATA will ensure students have a clear understanding of the world of Economics and Business impact on their levels and the importance of understanding the best routes of accessing these worlds.

In order to help face the challenges of a competitive local labour market ATA will:

- Ensure up-to-date, user-friendly labour market intelligence/information (LMI) is readily accessible by young people, teachers and parents/carers.
- Students are given the opportunity to gain experience of the world of work. This could include career insights from industry experts, work tasters, mentoring, enterprise activities, participation in careers events and work experience in line with the latest Statutory Guidance – Careers Inspiration which is currently targeted for Last updated May 2025 - [Careers guidance and access for education and training providers - GOV.UK](#)
- Ensure every student can evaluate the knowledge and skills they need for the workplace.

Careers Education Through CPSE and HEG

At the Academy, careers education is delivered through a structured programme embedded within the CPSE (Citizenship, Personal, Social and Economic) curriculum and, in the Sixth Form, through Higher Education Guidance lessons (HEG). This ensures that all pupils receive a coherent, age-appropriate progression of careers learning from Year 7 to Year 13. The programme is designed to equip pupils with the knowledge, skills, and attributes necessary to make informed decisions about their future education, training, and employment, in line with statutory guidance and national best practice.

Key Stage 3

Year 7

Pupils begin by developing the foundations of personal and social awareness. Topics include making informed decisions, maintaining mental wellbeing, seeking help, and fostering positive relationships. Lessons on equality and online safety support pupils in understanding their rights and responsibilities in both physical and digital environments.

Year 8

The curriculum introduces pupils to the world of work. They explore different types and patterns of employment, career pathways, and the rights young people hold in the workplace. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their attitudes towards work and consider how financial and digital literacy influence their future choices.

Year 9

Pupils examine the impact of discrimination, including within employment contexts. They also explore the value of active citizenship and volunteering, which supports the development of transferable skills. Online safety is revisited to reinforce responsible digital behaviour.

Key Stage 4

Year 10

The focus of careers lessons in Year 10 is on employability and future planning. Pupils assess their personal strengths and areas for development, set goals, and explore the skills required for success in the workplace. They are introduced to the labour market, including local and global employment trends, and learn how to research and secure work experience. Lessons also address building an online career profile, understanding employment rights and responsibilities, and challenging stereotypes in career choices. Themes of positive relationships and influence are revisited in the context of professional conduct.

Year 11

Pupils reflect on their strengths and interests to identify appropriate post-16 pathways. They are supported in accessing information about further education and training and receive guidance on applications to sixth forms and colleges, including writing personal statements and securing academic and professional references. Online safety continues to be emphasised as pupils prepare for the digital aspects of modern education and employment.

Key Stage 5 (HEG)

Year 12 – Higher Education Guidance (HEG)

In the first term, pupils focus on preparing for life after sixth form. They explore a range of post-18 pathways, including university (with an introduction to course types such as joint and combined honours), apprenticeships (including degree apprenticeships), gap years, and study abroad. The HEG programme includes guidance on student finance and the UCAS application process, including timelines and personal statement writing. Pupils are introduced to the role of the Academy careers adviser and HEG lessons supports them in the complete a careers survey to identify relevant opportunities. Careers planning includes understanding the distinction between a job and a career, setting long-term goals, and preparing CVs and for interviews. Mental wellbeing, healthy lifestyles, and substance awareness are also addressed in the context of sixth form and university life.

Year 13 – Higher Education Guidance (HEG)

Pupils refine their post-18 plans, including redrafting personal statements, confirming university choices, and completing student finance applications. They receive guidance on results day procedures and securing their chosen course. Practical preparation for university life includes packing, understanding the opportunities and risks of freshers' week, and making

informed lifestyle choices. Pupils also explore postgraduate study options and revisit themes of discrimination and equality in higher education and employment contexts.

Careers Education Through the Social Curriculum

At the Academy, the Social Curriculum is delivered through weekly form time sessions. Elements of the social curriculum are designed to complement and reinforce the broader careers education programme. Each year group receives content tailored to their developmental stage.

The Social Curriculum provides pupils with a broad cultural education and regular opportunities to develop oracy, debate, and critical thinking skills. These are essential competencies for future success in education and employment. Pupils are taught to express themselves clearly and respectfully, engage with national awareness events, and reflect on the Academy's core values. The curriculum also revisits and reinforces key learning from CPSE lessons, ensuring continuity and depth in personal development and careers-related learning.

Key Stage 3

Year 7

Pupils begin by exploring themes of acceptance, inclusion, and character resilience. They are introduced to the importance of making good decisions, managing time effectively, and maintaining mental and emotional wellbeing. The development of oracy and debate skills begins here, laying the foundation for confident communication. Sessions on online safety, including emerging issues such as deepfakes, support pupils in navigating digital environments safely; an essential aspect of modern careers education.

Year 8

The focus expands to include identity, interests, and the influence of peer pressure and misinformation. Pupils continue to build resilience and develop a growth mindset, both of which are critical for long-term career success. The curriculum supports pupils in understanding the value of positive relationships and wellbeing, while continuing to develop their oracy and debate skills. Study skills and time management are reinforced to support academic and personal development.

Year 9

As pupils prepare for the transition to GCSEs, the curriculum introduces themes of professionalism, self-presentation, and empathy. Pupils explore their role within the community and reflect on how emotions influence decision-making. These sessions support the development of self-awareness and interpersonal skills, which are vital for future workplace readiness. Oracy, debate, and digital literacy continue to be key components.

Key Stage 4

Year 10

The curriculum begins to explicitly address careers-related content, including the labour market and rights in the workplace. Pupils explore the value of hard work, moral values, and the principles of equality and equity. Online communication and the risks and opportunities of digital engagement are examined in greater depth. These sessions are designed to prepare pupils for the realities of the working world while continuing to develop their academic and personal skills.

Year 11

Pupils are supported in planning for their future, with a focus on keeping options open and making informed decisions about post-16 pathways. Sessions include preparation for sixth form consultation day, including interview and presentation skills. The curriculum reinforces the importance of resilience, mental wellbeing, and respectful relationships, while continuing to develop pupils' ability to articulate their views through structured debate.

Key Stage 5

Year 12

The Social Curriculum in the Sixth Form continues to support pupils' personal and professional development. Pupils are guided through the transition to Year 12, with a focus on goal setting, decision-making, and staying on track with academic and career objectives. They are encouraged to critically evaluate online content and reflect on their progress following mock assessments. Oracy and debate remain central, alongside sessions on emotional regulation, time management, and digital behaviour.

Year 13

In their final year, pupils consolidate the habits and skills necessary for success beyond the Academy. Topics include informed risk-taking, coping with exam stress, and managing online wellbeing. Pupils revisit themes of prejudice and discrimination, and continue to refine their self-presentation and communication skills. These sessions are designed to ensure that pupils leave the Academy as confident, articulate, and resilient individuals, well-prepared for the demands of higher education, apprenticeships, or employment.

Labour Market Information

[Explore LMI data – LMI For All](#) is a site that gives up-to-date Labour Market Information on careers in different industries and an overview of the jobs in each industry.

[Labour Market Information for London](#) gives specific London job market information and data.

Career Pathways:

ARMY SCHOLARSHIPS and APPRENTICESHIPS

[Explore Different Types of Army Roles | Army Jobs](#)

CIVIL SERVICE

Fast track apprenticeships www.gov.uk/guidance/civil-service-fast-track-apprenticeship-fast-track-schemes

CONSTRUCTION

www.goconstruct.org - explains the many routes and careers within the construction industry.
www.opendoors.construction – a chance to see behind the scenes at major live construction sites. Job roles include; Civil Engineers, Project Managers and Quantity Surveyors and Engineers.

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

[Getting into film, TV, games, animation and VFX - ScreenSkills](#) – for careers in film, TV, games, animation or VFX

[Find your perfect role in the creative industries - Creative Careers](#) – unusual job roles in the creative industries including working as a producer, editor, designer etc.

[Creative jobs: discover roles in the creative industries | Prospects.ac.uk](#) - all careers in the creative world.

ENGINEERING

For an insight into working in Engineering go to: [The Student Engineer](#) or [Careers in Engineering | UCAS](#)

IT

justit.co.uk – for IT & Digital training and Apprenticeships.

[Careers with a Computer Science degree](#)

[Jobs that use Computing and ICT - Careers - BBC Bitesize](#)

LAW

www.Lawcareers.net – gives details of how to start a career in law via an Apprenticeship.

Prospects has a good selection of alternative law careers including Barristers' Clerk, Chartered Legal Executive, Tax Adviser etc - www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors/law-sector/law-careers

To access law work experience with top law firms, offered during the school holidays try: www.primecommitment.co.uk

MATHS CAREERS

The [Maths Careers](#) website offers age related information on all things training, studying and working with maths.

Prospects show the various job options with qualifications in maths:

www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/what-can-i-do-with-my-degree/mathematics

MEDICINE

medicmentor.co.uk is an excellent website which students can register onto directly. This organisation runs events at various locations throughout the year.

<https://melaninmedics.com> promotes diversity within medical careers particularly for those of African and Caribbean descent.

<https://www.themedicportal.com> can be used for information and support about the application process, developed in partnership with The Royal Society of Medicine.

www.stepintothens.nhs.uk - explores more unusual careers in the NHS – over 350 job roles are listed. For details on entering Midwifery go to:

MUSIC/PERFORMING ARTS

If you dream of becoming an actress, songwriter, composer or producer these sites might be of interest to you:

[Careers in music: how to get started in the industry | Prospects.ac.uk](#)

[What Can You Do With a Performing Arts Degree? | Top Universities](#)

<https://www.brit.croydon.sch.uk> a London based performing arts college.

[The Academy of Contemporary Music - www.acm.ac.uk](#).

A university which involves students within the industry to give them a career head start.

Or for Acting & Theatre career advice go to: allaboutschoolleavers.co.uk/industries/performing-arts

SPORTS

<https://careers-in-sport.co.uk> Advice and guidance on landing your dream job in the sports industry. Many London colleges offer various Post 16 courses if you have a particular talent in a chosen sport. See the Careers Officer for more information.

STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths)

[STEM Careers Support](#)

[Destination STEM](#)

Apprenticeship Information

[Find Apprenticeships | RateMyApprenticeship](#)

www.Amazingapprenticeships.com

www.Apprenticeshipguide.co.uk

PRACTICAL SKILLS APPRENTICESHIPS

- JTL offer apprenticeship training in **Electrical, Plumbing, Heating & Ventilation, and Engineering Maintenance**
- CITB (the Construction Industry Training Board) offer 30 different types of Apprenticeships in the **Construction industry**
- K10 offer construction based apprenticeships across London
- Transport for London offer Apprenticeships in: **Rail & Underground; Surface Transport; and Specialist Services**
- Network Rail offer **Engineering apprenticeships** to young people with at least 4 GCSEs at A*-C
- Builders Merchants Federation offer Apprenticeships in Business Administration; Customer Service; Logistics; Management; Team Leading; Warehousing & Storage
- Early Careers - Wates offer Level 3-6 Apprenticeships in: **Production, Quantity Surveying, Building Services, Mechanical and Electrical** to students who have gained a minimum of 8 GCSE's at C grade, with B in both Maths and English, and are keen to get into the Construction market.

DEGREE APPRENTICESHIPS

prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/apprenticeships/degree-apprenticeships

www.university.which.co.uk/Apprenticeship/advice

School Leaver opportunities

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	

This chart gives a general outline of various qualification levels, general entry requirements needed for each level and the progression opportunities available after each level is successfully completed. If you plan to apply for a course, you will need to check that you fulfil that particular establishment's entry requirements. Click on the thumbnail image on the left to see the full-size chart.

What is the International Baccalaureate?

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme is an internationally recognised qualification for students aged 16 to 19. It is based on a study of a range of subjects and leads to a single qualification, rather than separate qualifications. The IB Diploma is a leader in international education and is recognised by universities in 140 countries.

The IB Diploma is a 2-year course, at Level 3 (comparable with A Level) and is designed to encourage you to: *learn how to learn; ask challenging questions; develop a strong sense of*

your own identity and culture; and develop the ability to communicate with and understand people from other countries and cultures.

The IB Diploma Programme is made up of a compulsory 'core', plus six optional subjects:



Compulsory core elements: theory of knowledge, extended essay, CAS (creativity, action, service)

Optional subjects: first language, second language, experimental sciences, mathematics and computer science, the arts, individuals and society

Management of provider access requests

Procedure

Any provider wishing to request access should contact the following member of staff:

Name	Juliet Fitzherbert
Telephone	020 8877 0357
Email	Careers.adviser@ashcroftacademy.org.uk

Opportunities for access

Events are planned into the Academy's Careers programme which offer providers an opportunity to speak to students and/or their parents. The Academy calendar varies from year to year so, providers wish to be included, they must contact the member of staff named above to identify the most suitable time. The events are usually arranged well in advance so it is essential that providers contact the Academy early in the academic year so that they can be included.

Access to students and/or parents will be granted on the understanding that information and guidance offered by providers is related to technical courses and apprenticeship opportunities only.

Providers will be expected to meet the Academy's safeguarding requirements, which can be found in the Safeguarding Policy Statement on the Academy's website.

Premises and facilities

Access to appropriate rooms and IT facilities will be discussed and agreed in advance of the visit.

Providers are welcome to provide relevant brochures and other printed material specifically related to technical courses and apprenticeships. These will be made available to students in the 'Careers' section of our Learning and Resource Centre.

Approval by: Douglas Mitchell, Principal - August 2025

Next Review – August 2027

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