

# A GUIDE TO QUALIFICATIONS AFTER YEAR 11

## INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE

Course for high academic achievers covering a broad range of subjects. Only offered at Richmond College locally. Recognised by universities all over the world.

### Entry Requirements

Minimum of 46 points (A\*=8 A=7 B=6 etc) so mainly A\*-B grades.

### Length of course and information

- 2 years.
- Assessment is usually a combination of exams and coursework.
- Required to study two languages (English and a Modern Foreign Language), Maths, a humanities subject, a science subject and an optional subject.
- Also required; to follow a 'Theory of Knowledge', 'Creativity, Action, and Service' and write an extended essay on a subject of your choice.

## A LEVELS (AS & A2)

Broad range of subjects, which are studied in greater depth than GCSE. After AS/A2 levels you can go on to university or go into employment.

### Entry requirements

Generally 5 GCSEs grades A\*-C, but can be higher in some schools and colleges including Richmond College who use their points system which looks at your best 8 GCSE grades and should equal 40 points or above (A\*=8 A=7 B=6 C=5 etc) and should include English and Maths at grade C or above.

### Length of course & information

- In the first year you usually study 4 AS Levels (in some cases you may take 5 subjects) and then in the second year you continue with 3 subjects to A2 level. Some subjects are offered as a Double Award and these will count as 2 AS/A2 levels.
- Assessment is a combination of exams and coursework.

## VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS - BTEC DIPLOMAS

Modular courses focussing on specific areas of study related to the world of work such as Engineering, Sports & Leisure, Health & Social Care, Animal Care, IT amongst others.

### Entry requirements

- |                                          |                   |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| ❖ BTEC National Diploma (Advanced)       | GCSE grades A*- C |
| ❖ BTEC First Diploma (Intermediate)      | GCSE grades D/E   |
| ❖ BTEC Introductory Diploma (Foundation) | GCSE grades F-G   |

### Length of courses & information

- 2 years for BTEC National Diploma. From here you can progress on to university or into employment.
- 1 year for BTEC Introductory and First Diplomas. You can progress from an Introductory or First Diploma to the higher-level course or into employment.
- Assessment is continuous through coursework, practical work and presentations.

## THE NEW 14-19 DIPLOMAS

The 'Diploma' is a new qualification developed by employers, schools, colleges and universities. The different subjects on offer include: creative & media, IT, hospitality and catering amongst others. Key facts:

- It's usually a 2 year course, whatever level you study at
- You'll learn in the classroom but will also do practical projects and work experience
- Learn life skills that are important for work, study and the future

You can study a Diploma at three levels: Foundation, Higher and Advanced.

- The Foundation Diploma is the same as 5 GCSEs at grades D to G
- The Higher Diploma is the same as 7 GCSEs at grades A\* to C
- The Advanced Diploma is the same as 3.5 A levels

At the moment they are being offered at some colleges throughout the country but you need to check each college for more details. You can progress onto higher education, a higher level course or into employment. For more information on the new Diplomas visit: [www.yp.direct.gov.uk/diplomas](http://www.yp.direct.gov.uk/diplomas)

## NVQs - NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Work based qualifications, which involve study at college full-time or combined with work placement. Examples include Beauty Therapy, Hairdressing, Catering, Motor Vehicle etc

### Entry requirements

Will depend on the college on course but generally:

NVQ Level 1                      GCSE grades E-G  
NVQ Level 2                      GCSE grades C/D

Personal qualities, skills and relevant work experience also taken into account.

### Length of course

- Length is dependent on the pace at which you progress but usually 1-2 years.
- Courses can be full-time or part-time and can combine as an apprenticeship.

## CONSTRUCTION AWARDS & CITY & GUILDS

- In the last few years more specialist construction courses have come into place, which includes plumbing, bricklaying, carpentry, electrical installation etc.
- The best thing to do is check which colleges offer construction courses and what grades they require (Richmond, West Thames, Nescot etc). Plumbing usually requires C grades, whereas painting and decorating may ask for D-G grades. They will usually look at your English and Maths grades.
- Places are competitive so it is a good idea to apply to a back up college.
- Speak to your Connexions Adviser (Bernie) for more information and advice.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR YEAR 11S

- ❖ Attend college evenings and school based college events. On Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October between 6.30-7.30pm Colleges/6<sup>th</sup> forms/employers will be coming to Grey Court so you can speak to them and find out more.
- ❖ You can apply to as many colleges as you like and it is a good idea to have a back up option.
- ❖ Remember colleges will look at your predicted grades and your reference and this will include attendance and punctuality, so it is important to ensure you are in school and on time in year 11.
- ❖ **Financial Support** - Remember you may be eligible to claim EMA, which may entitle you to £10, £20 or £30 a week to help with college costs for more info <http://ema.direct.gov.uk/>
- ❖ **Careers Advice** - Bernie Corrighan is the Connexions Adviser in school who supports year 11 with careers advice and guidance. She can help with anything from advice on college courses to CV writing. Each year 11 will have an appointment to have a chat. Bernie is in school in the Connexions office in Newman House (top floor) on Thursday and Friday during term time and on Friday lunchtimes in the LRC. Alternatively you can email on [bcorrighan@greycourt.org.uk](mailto:bcorrighan@greycourt.org.uk) or contact on 07827238907.
- ❖ **Apprenticeships** - An apprenticeship is where you work and learn on the job as well as attending a college or training centre to gain an NVQ in your chosen area e.g. Hairdressing, Business Admin etc. If you are looking for apprenticeships or work speak to Bernie about these to find out more about opportunities and help available. A new national website has been launched which advertises apprenticeships [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk) (go to the vacancies section and register). Alternatively the Choice website [www.mychoicelondon.c.o.uk](http://www.mychoicelondon.c.o.uk) advertises apprenticeships in the London area.
- ❖ **Careers Information** - If you want information about different careers look on [www.connexions-direct.com/jobs4u](http://www.connexions-direct.com/jobs4u) or in the Careers section of the LRC in school. If you are not sure what you want to do, and if you need to get some ideas try [www.fasttomato.com](http://www.fasttomato.com) or [www.kudos-online.co.uk](http://www.kudos-online.co.uk) which are questionnaires designed to give you career ideas based on your interests.