

Focus on the Future!

Part One:

Year 10 Guide to Post 16 options.

Spotlight on.....



Here you can find out about one of your many options when you leave school- Colchester Sixth Form College.

What is it like?



- You will follow a structured timetable of chosen lessons, including regular tutor meetings and daily registration
- You are encouraged to access to a range of extra activities including sports, clubs, creative opportunities, societies and additional qualifications
- It has around 3000 students attending at one time so is one of the largest sixth form colleges in the county
- Most subjects are assessed via examinations (similar to how GCSEs are assessed)

Qualifications on offer

A Levels

Most students will study three A levels (Advanced Levels). There are also some 'applied' subjects on offer which are the equivalent of A levels (Applied General Extended Certificate). The 'applied' option may have a larger amount of course work and fewer exams and may cover a more work related approach to the subject.

You have almost a free choice over what to study but will be advised if certain subjects work well together. For example students wanting to study physics will also need to take maths.

The majority of students study for 3 subjects over two years. Students can choose from a vast list of subjects including electronics, drama, music technology, maths, sociology, and economics and so on.

Students aiming apply to Oxford and Cambridge University can access a range of specialist support. There are also programmes for students interested in professions such as medicine, teaching, finance and journalism.



Advanced Foundation Programme (AFP)

The Advanced Foundation Programme is a one year course. It is mainly offered to students who gain grade 3's in some key GCSEs and need to improve on those grades to then progress to their A levels.

Students start this course from a variety of different routes – some are offered a place at their college interview and some will transfer to this if their GCSE results are not as expected.

Entry Requirements



For A levels, you need to have a range of at least five to seven GCSE passes at grade 4 or higher, ideally including English Language (or English Literature) and Mathematics. Don't worry if this doesn't sound like the grades you will get. We will look at many options over the next few weeks. This is just one of them!

Certain subjects will require a specific GCSE subject at grade 5 or 6, or, in a small number of cases, a grade 7 or 8. For example, A Level Biology and Chemistry require GCSE grade 6 in two GCSE sciences and Mathematics.

What could you do after this?



A levels are a great way to leave your options open. If you have more than one area that you are interested in, A levels will give you the chance to study three different subjects and give you more time to decide on a career path.

A levels can also be required for certain careers. For example if you know you want to be a doctor, you will need to study A levels in certain subjects.

If you study for A levels you could progress into employment, a university course, a gap year or a higher or degree level apprenticeship course.

How to Apply

1. Be aware of the application deadline. You must normally apply before 31st January. I advise students to apply before Christmas to be well within the deadline.
2. The Sixth form normally visit your school assembly to tell you more about what is on offer and update you on anything new they are offering.
3. You then normally have an opportunity to go and look around the sixth form on an open evening event.
4. You can then **apply** on the sixth form website. This is very simple and takes a few minutes.
5. You will attend an interview and hopefully be offered a place as long as you go on to achieve the GCSE grades needed.

You are not committing yourself by applying or by attending an interview!

You can change your mind about which subjects you end up studying and can tell the sixth form of any changes you want to make. You may end up going to a different college, but you must apply to give yourself these choices!

How to find out more

- A great place to start looking into this more is the sixth form website:

<https://www.colchsfc.ac.uk/>

- For more information on A levels try these:

<https://www.ucas.com/further-education/post-16-qualifications/qualifications-you-can-take/levels>

<https://successatschool.org/advisedetails/546/what-are-a-levels>

- For help deciding which A level subjects to study and what you might need for a specific university course try this:

<https://www.informedchoices.ac.uk/>

Quick Round Up:

- A good choice if you like structure in your day.
- A good choice if you can cope well with exams and 'academic' study.
- A good choice if you want to leave you career options open.
- A good choice if you need specific A levels for a chosen career.
- A good choice if you want to study at a large college.
- A good choice if you want additional courses and opportunities alongside your study.

I hope you have found this helpful. Please email me if you have any questions.

I am available on a Wednesday. leaves@ramseyacademy.com

