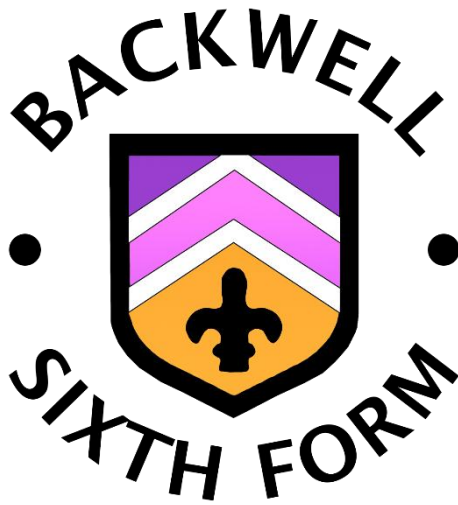




Year 12

**Post 18 Options
(non HE)**

June 2026

There are a wide range of options available to students when they leave school after Year 13. This guide aims to give advice on the opportunities outside of Higher Education.

Which Sector to Choose?

There are a variety of resources available to support students who are making decisions as to which type of industry or 'job sector' may suit them best at this time of their lives. Primarily, students should be researching this on **Unifrog** (all students have been given information on this excellent resource in school), but in terms of a good 'job-matching' questionnaire we recommend 'Prospects Planner' (www.prospects.ac.uk/planner). This resource will suggest certain roles or sector based on the answers to a series of questions. Although it is not telling the student what to do, the student can research the results based on their preferences and can be a good resource to research roles that they had not previously considered.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are available in a variety of industries and career sectors, for example law, finance, engineering, digital media, science, business and education to name but a few. An apprenticeship is a genuine job, and an apprentice is employed from day one. Working alongside experienced staff whilst gaining job-specific skills and earning a wage, they combine this with studying for an industry-recognised qualification related to their role.

There are apprenticeships available at different levels as, once the apprenticeship has been completed successfully, they are eligible to apply for the next level. Most Year 13 students would apply to either a Higher or Degree Apprenticeships although, in some areas, they may decide to complete an Advanced Level Apprenticeship before moving on to the higher level. This could be due to the subject/grades required or the nature of the job.

Apprenticeship	Level	Equivalent Educational Level
Intermediate	2	5 GCSE passes at grades 9 – 4
Advanced	3	2 A Level/CTEC passes
Higher	4, 5	Foundation Degree
Degree	6, 7	Bachelor's or Master's Degree

Although the legal wage for an apprentice in their first year is the same as the national minimum wage, in reality the salaries are much higher. Level 6 (Degree) Apprenticeships we have advertised this year have ranged between £18000 and £28000 p.a., with the average being around £22000. The fees for the qualification are paid for by the employer and, depending on the employer, they may also offer subsidised accommodation.

Apprenticeships with large organisations start being advertised a year in advance (October 2026 for a September 2027 start) with deadlines from December. Most other vacancies are advertised from January onwards. Students are advised to check Backwell School's monthly careers bulletin for local opportunities as well the following websites for national vacancies:

- Government apprenticeship website www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship
- UCAS website www.ucas.com/apprenticeships-in-the-uk
- 'Not Going To Uni' website www.notgoingtouni.co.uk.

Companies will ask for a formal application and, in most cases, an interview. Larger organisations may ask the applicants to attend an assessment day, which could involve an interview, presentation and/or group activity. Support is available for this, so it is important that the student keeps the sixth form team up to date with their progress.

Top Tips for Applying to Apprenticeships

- Research the types of roles and industries which suit your interests, skills and abilities. Talk through your ideas with the sixth form team, tutor and teachers.
- Make contact with people who work in those industries and organise some work experience.
- Research the organisations and universities/colleges which offer apprenticeships. Employers could be large companies or small local firms – which would you prefer? Think about where you want to work/study.
- Speak to your teachers regarding your predicted grades. Higher and Degree apprenticeships vary in their A Level/CTEC entry requirements.
- Put together a CV and practise your interview technique by organising a mock interview. Seek advice from the sixth form team if necessary.
- Remember that you can apply to several apprenticeships at the same time (as well as university applications). Keep your options open.
- Speak to the sixth form team if you are unsure about applying to apprenticeships or any aspects to do with your next steps.

