

RPA



Continuing in learning: information for YOUNG PEOPLE in 2015

RPA FROM SUMMER 2015

From summer 2015, RPA is all about engaging in education or training until your 18th birthday.

RPA stands for **Raising the Participation Age**. The Government has raised the age at which young people need to continue in education or training. It **isn't about raising the school leaving age** and it **doesn't mean you can't get a job**. It's all about **continuing in learning** – and you have lots of choice about how to do this in the way that suits you best.

SO WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS?

There are 3 main things you can choose between:

- **Continuing to study under the Study Programme** – either A Levels or equivalent, or a mixed programme which could include some form of workplace experience
- **Starting an Apprenticeship**
- **Full-time work or volunteering combined with part-time education or training**

You can **find out more** about each of these over the page.

WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?

Most 16 or 17 year olds already continue in some form of education or training so RPA is not a big change for them. But **ALL** young people should have the chance to develop the skills you need for adult life. **Continuing in learning** will give you as much chance as possible to get the qualifications, the knowledge and the practical skills you need to help you succeed. This is true whether you are thinking of going into further or higher education, going for an Apprenticeship, or looking for a job. There is evidence that getting qualifications at this age can help you earn more over your whole lifetime – for example young people with two or more A Levels earn around 14% more than those without. Research has also suggested that, over the course of their career, those with an Apprenticeship earn £100,000 more than those without.

FINDING OUT MORE ABOUT MY OPTIONS

■ Continuing to study under the Study Programme

This could be A Levels or other further education courses, and it could mean staying at the same school or academy if it offers post-16 education, or moving to another school, academy or college.

If you are not yet sure about continuing in full-time studying or going for an Apprenticeship, the Study Programme may offer other ways for you to move forward. If you are 16 or 17, you could have a mixed programme with at least one significant qualification, an internship, traineeship or other sort of workplace experience, continued study of English and maths towards a good GCSE grade, and study skills and other development opportunities.

■ Starting an Apprenticeship

Apprenticeships give you the chance to train for an NVQ (National Vocational Qualification) while earning a wage and learning the skills for a particular type of job. The training part of an Apprenticeship means that you would be continuing in learning which is the idea behind RPA.

■ Full-time work or volunteering combined with part-time education or training

RPA still means you can choose to get a job or do volunteering if you decide that is the best option for you. "Full-time" means for 20 or more hours each week. But you would have to continue in "accredited learning" alongside your employment or volunteering – this could be in work-based learning or by attending college as well as going to work. The training needs to be for at least 280 hours over a whole year. This is equivalent to about a day each week but it can be arranged flexibly to suit you and your employer or the place where you are volunteering.

Interested in being self-employed? You can do this but the requirement to continue doing learning alongside employment will still apply.

WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

Your school or academy is responsible for making sure everyone from Year 8 upwards has access to independent careers guidance, covering all these post-16 options. Check what your school or academy is doing and ask them for the guidance you might need.

If you want to find out more about the different post-16 options that might be open to you, use the **UCAS Progress** online course search which includes details of local courses for young people aged between 14 and 19 (or up to 25 for young people with a learning difficulty/ disability). Go to www.ucasprogress.com

To find out more about Apprenticeships, have a look at the **National Apprenticeship Service** website at www.apprenticeships.org.uk

The **Birmingham Careers Service** website contains all sorts of useful information about all your options and how to make the choice that's best for you. You can reach the website from www.birminghamcareersservice.co.uk

If you want somewhere else to go for impartial advice, you can contact the **National Careers Service** at nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk or by phoning their helpline on 0800 100 900 – it's open between 8am and 10pm every day of the week.

Birmingham City Council email for queries: rpa@birmingham.gov.uk

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