

## The Future Starts Here

### Helping you make the best Post-16 choice

This guide is designed to introduce you to the range of sixth form and higher education colleges available within Hackney and in the surrounding boroughs. We want you to start thinking about this as soon as possible so that you make the right choice for you. You will need to do your own detailed research to find the most appropriate college.

Once you have read through all the information, make a shortlist of possible options then visit their websites to find out if that place will be right for you. Ms McAuslan, Librarian, Aspiration and Careers Manager, and Ms Douglas Head of Year 11 are available to help you.

The 'grades needed' within the college guides is an indicator - you will need to check the course you want to apply to for specific requirements, which are very often higher than the general requirement, particularly at those establishments with an Ofsted 'Outstanding' rating.

All institutions offering A Levels will offer the facilitating subjects (see glossary). In this guide, we've highlighted subjects that are less commonly studied or which give you a flavour of the place of learning itself.

Now is also the time to start work on your personal statement. You will shortly receive a Google form to help you consolidate your ideas. Things to consider including are: your hobbies and interests outside of school (sports and clubs you are part of, libraries you use, genres of book, theatre, film you particularly like) any responsibilities you have (looking after siblings, working in your uncle's shop - it all builds a picture) your ambitions and why you want to study your chosen subjects, what you want to be doing in five, ten, fifteen years time.

You will also be having an interview this term with an external careers advisor to help you make your choices and work on your personal statement.

### Six things to think about

1. We're not going to sugar coat this: A Levels are a lot harder than GCSEs. You'll need resilience, application, the ability to be proactive and work alone - and most importantly to think critically. They are also hugely rewarding and as well as serving as your passport to an excellent further education and then a successful and well paid career beyond that, they are a chance to immerse yourself in your favourite subjects and apply yourself to what you love.
2. Talk to your teachers! They know their subject areas inside out and will be able to give you the lowdown on what it's like to study the subjects you're considering at A Level or BTEC.
3. Choose the college that suits you. Make your choice based on what subjects you want to study and how well the college will support your goals. Don't choose a college based on where your friends are going.
4. Certain universities (and specific courses) will want you to study specific subjects. If you already have a course and destination in mind make sure you have up to date information on what their requirements are.

5. Some A Levels are applicable to a wider range of degree courses than others. If you haven't yet decided what degree you want to study, it's worth including at least one facilitating subject (see glossary) within your choices so you keep your options open.
6. Decide whether A Levels or BTEC is right for you. Learning A Levels will involve a teaching style similar to that which you have been used to at GCSE. They are often essential if your chosen pathway involves university. BTECs are good for students who want the focus of learning to be in a more practical, less theoretical way. BTEC students are increasingly using this as a pathway into university, however BTEC students can also progress into the workplace straight after college. BTECs are generally assessed with coursework and projects rather than a final exam so might suit you better if the pressure of exams prevents you from doing your best work. Please don't assume that a BTEC is an easier option - you'll be required to attend all your classes, work consistently hard and give it your all whatever you choose.

### Step-by-step instructions for apply to college for Year 11s (updated January 2021)

1. Decide which subjects you want to study.
2. As a rough guide, students generally study either **three** subjects for A Level or **one** subject for Level 3 BTEC. However in some circumstances you can combine A Levels with BTECs. You need to check with the individual college to which you are applying to see if this is possible.
3. Using the website links in the college guide below, research and choose at least three colleges to apply to. **Choosing a college is not a guarantee of a place.** Some colleges only offer places to students with high predicted grades (7 and above in 5 subjects). Use your research to help you make the best choice based on your abilities. If in doubt, apply to NCC, CONEL, BSix or one of the other sixth form colleges as a backup as they require lower grades than the school sixth forms.
4. Once you have chosen your colleges you are ready to apply. Make sure you have the following information to hand:
  - a. Your predicted grades. You can find these by downloading the report on DPR.
  - b. Your personal statement. Write 2-3 paragraphs explaining why you have chosen this college, why you want to study your chosen course, what career currently interests you. Don't procrastinate! It doesn't have to be perfect; you just have to get it done. Once finished, check it for SPaGs.
  - c. Miss Douglas's email address as a referee: [juliadouglas@hackneynewschoolcst.org](mailto:juliadouglas@hackneynewschoolcst.org)
5. Now it's time to apply. Each college has its own application form that you have to download from the website or fill in on the website. Teachers and the Careers Manager cannot do this step for you. If you need support you can attend the application clinic at 12.45pm on Fridays (email Ms McAuslan for a link).
6. Using the website links, go to the homepage of your chosen college, follow the directions to get to the application page.
7. Fill in the application form and submit. Take a screenshot or a photograph of the submission receipt as evidence.
8. Email the evidence of your application to Ms Douglas and Ms McAuslan.
9. The college will contact you directly and invite you to come for an interview or explain why they will not be offering you a place.
10. Following the interview, the college may make you an offer, based on your predicted grades.

## College Guide

### Big Creative

**What is it:** The largest creative college in London

**Where is it:** Walthamstow

**Ofsted rating:** Good

**What grades will I need:** Usually 5 GCSEs at grades 4-9 including English (or equivalent).

**What can I study there:** Fashion, Makeup, Performing Arts, Media, Music, Technical Theatre, Art & Design and Health and Fitness. BCE graduates gain BTECs, OCR, and complete apprenticeships.

Find out more: [www.bigcreative.education](http://www.bigcreative.education)

### BSix

**What is it:** Sixth form college

**Where is it:** Clapton, Hackney

**Ofsted rating:** Requires Improvement (though a recent interim report shows significant progress)

**What can I study there:** A Levels, OCN or BTEC in a range of subjects including Sciences, Nursing, ITC, Creative Media, Music Production, Health, Care and Early Years and more.

**What grades will I need:** To study A Levels, you need five GCSEs at grade 9-4.

Find out more: [www.bsix.ac.uk](http://www.bsix.ac.uk)

### The Bridge Academy

**What is it:** School sixth form

**Where is it:** Dalston, Hackney

**Ofsted rating:** Good

**What can I study there:** A Levels & some BTECs. A Levels include English, Maths, Humanities, MFL, Philosophy, Psychology, Economics, Sociology and Politics

**What grades will I need:** Six 4-9 grades including English and Mathematics with a minimum of a grade 6 in your chosen subjects.

Find out more: [www.bridgeacademy.hackney.sch.uk](http://www.bridgeacademy.hackney.sch.uk)

### The Camden School for Girls Sixth Form

**What is it:** A sixth form school for boys and girls (despite the name!)

**Where is it:** Camden

**Ofsted rating:** Outstanding

**What can I study there:** Choice of 23 A Levels including Maths, English, MFL, Latin, Greek, Theology and Philosophy of Religion, History of Art, Classical Civilisation

**What grades will I need:** At least GCSEs at grade 6 or above in English language and mathematics, and 3 other GCSEs at grade 6 or above.

Find out more: [www.camdengirls.camden.sch.uk](http://www.camdengirls.camden.sch.uk)

### **Cardinal Pole Catholic School Sixth Form**

**What is it:** A school sixth form

**Where is it:** Clapton, Hackney

**Ofsted rating:** Outstanding (sixth form)

**What can I study there:** 17 A Levels including Business, Drama, Psychology and Sociology.

**What grades will I need:** Six GCSEs between 4-9 including three 6s and above. English Lit/Lang and Maths Grade 4 or above.

**Find out more:** [www.cardinalpole.co.uk](http://www.cardinalpole.co.uk)

### **The City Academy, Hackney Sixth Form**

**What is it:** A school sixth form

**Where is it:** Homerton, Hackney

**Ofsted rating:** Outstanding

**What can I study there:** 30 AS and A Levels, and BTECs across subjects including Drama, Sociology, Textiles, PE, Business.

**What grades will I need:** 7 GCSEs including English Language and maths, at grade 9-5.

A minimum of Grade 6 in the subjects that you want to study at A level.

**Find out more:** [www.thecityacademy.org](http://www.thecityacademy.org)

### **City & Islington College (CANDI)**

**What is it:** Further Education College

**Where is it:** Four campuses based around Islington and the City Fringe

**Ofsted rating:** None available

**What can I study there:** 30 A Levels, T Levels, BTEC, apprenticeships in a wide variety of subjects including performance arts, fashion and textiles, electronics.

**What grades will I need:** 4 GCSEs including Grade 5 English Language and Maths.

**Find out more:** [www.candi.ac.uk](http://www.candi.ac.uk)

### **Clapton Girls' Academy Sixth Form**

**What is it:** School sixth form for girls

**Where is it:** Clapton, Hackney

**Ofsted rating:** Outstanding

**What can I study there:** A Level, and BTEC courses in a range of subjects including Maths, Government and Politics, Drama, Philosophy

**What grades will I need:** At least seven grade 5+ GCSEs (including Maths & English).

**Find out more:** [www.cgasixthform.com](http://www.cgasixthform.com)

### **Islington Sixth Form Consortium**

**What is it:** IC6 is made up of the joint sixth forms of four local schools.

**Where is it:** There are four sites across Shoreditch, Highbury and Angel

**Ofsted rating:** none available

**What can I study there:** AS Level, A Level Applied A Level, BTEC, Cambridge Technical programme, OCR. Subjects include Health and Social Care, MFL including Turkish, IT & Digital Media.

**What grades will I need:** For A Levels, an average GCSE point score of 6 often including a score of 6 in that particular GCSE subject as well as a minimum of grade 6 in both Maths and English. For BTEC/Cambridge Technical programme you will need an average GCSE point score of 5 often including a 5 in that particular GCSE subject as well as a minimum grade 5 in Maths and English.

**Find out more:** [ic6.co.uk](http://ic6.co.uk)

### **Haggerston School Sixth Form**

**What is it:** School sixth form

**Where is it:** Haggerston, Hackney

**Ofsted rating:** Good

**What can I study there:** A Levels and BTECs in subjects including Sport and Exercise Sciences, Business Studies, Economics, Drama, Sociology and Psychology. EPQ.

**What grades will I need:** A minimum of 6 GCSE grade 4 or above. At least two 4s and 4s in the subjects chosen for A Level.

**Find out more:** [haggerston.hackney.sch.uk](http://haggerston.hackney.sch.uk)

### **Mossbourne Community Academy Sixth Form**

**What is it:** School sixth form

**Where is it:** Hackney Downs

**Ofsted rating:** Outstanding

**What can I study there:** Choice of 20 A Levels including Latin, Classics, Product Design and Art. Committed students also study the EPQ.

**What grades will I need:** Minimum of 7 GCSE grades 4-9 including English and Maths.

**Find out more:** [www.6th.mossbourne.org](http://www.6th.mossbourne.org)

### **Our Lady's High School Sixth Form**

**What is it:** School Sixth form

**Where is it:** Stoke Newington, Hackney

**Ofsted rating:** Good

**What can I study there:** 23 A Levels and BTECs including Business Studies, Drama, Photography, Textile Design, Three Dimensional Design

**What grades will I need:** English GCSE at grade 4.5 or above Maths GCSE at grade 4 or above, plus at least three 9-5 grades in other GCSE subjects plus the subject specific entry requirement

**Find out more:** [www.ourladys.hackney.sch.uk](http://www.ourladys.hackney.sch.uk)

### LaSWAP Sixth Form

**What is it:** A consortium of four Camden schools

**Where is it:** Across four campuses based in La Sainte Union, William Ellis, Acland Burghley and Parliament Hill schools in Camden

**Ofsted rating:** Good (each school in the consortium has its own grade - this an average of all)

**What can I study there:** 34 A Levels including two History curriculum, Dance, German, photography. Also various BTECs, CACHE and Sports NVQ.

**What grades will I need:** English or Maths GCSE at grade 4 or above and the course requirements.

**Find out more:** [www.laswap.camden.sch.uk](http://www.laswap.camden.sch.uk)

### London Screen Academy

**What is it:** A sixth form college founded by film producers

**Where is it:** Highbury, Islington

**Ofsted rating:** Not yet rated

**What can I study there:** UAL Level 3 Extended Diploma in Creative Media Production and Technology which includes script development, writing and direction, Production, model making and props, costume, hair and makeup, camera, lighting and sound, post production and editing. Additionally, A Level English and Maths.

**What grades will I need:** A minimum of 5 GCSEs at grades 4-9 including Maths and English

**Find out more:** [www.lsa.ac.uk](http://www.lsa.ac.uk)

### Skinners' Academy Sixth Form

**What is it:** School sixth form

**Where is it:** Manor House, Hackney

**Ofsted rating:** Good

**What can I study there:** A-Level and BTEC qualifications at level 3.

**What grades will I need:** A minimum of a grade 5 in at least 5 GCSE subjects, including English and maths and a grade 6 in each subject to be studied at A Level, grade 5 for BTEC.

**Find out more:** [www.skinnersacademy.org.uk](http://www.skinnersacademy.org.uk)

### St Mary Magdalene Sixth Form

**What is it:** School sixth form

**Where is it:** Islington

**Ofsted rating:** Good

**What can I study there:** 22 A Levels including Mandarin, German and sociology. The EPQ is also available.

**What grades will I need:** At least grade 4 in English and Maths with five other subjects at grade 5 or above plus specific course requirements.

**Find out more:** [www.smmacademy.org](http://www.smmacademy.org)

### **Stoke Newington School & Sixth Form**

**What is it:** School sixth form

**Where is it:** Stoke Newington, Hackney

**Ofsted rating:** Good

**What can I study there:** A Levels including Photography, Computer Science and Geography and Sport and Business BTEC

**What grades will I need:** Requirements vary depending on subjects chosen

**Find out more:** [www.stokenewingtonschool.co.uk](http://www.stokenewingtonschool.co.uk)

### **New City College**

**What is it:** East London largest sixth form and adult education college

**Where is it:** Six campuses in Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Redbridge, Epping Forest and Havering

**Ofsted rating:** Good

**What can I study there:** BTECs, NVQs and Apprenticeships which cover a wide range of vocational subjects including Business, Accounting, Legal Secretary, IT Computing Construction. Also some A Levels

**What grades will I need:** Requirements vary, some courses will accept 4 GCSEs at grade 3

**Find out more:** [www.ncclondon.ac.uk](http://www.ncclondon.ac.uk)

### **The Petchey Academy Sixth Form**

**What is it:** School sixth form

**Where is it:** Dalston

**Ofsted rating:** Good

**What can I study there:** 20 A Levels and some BTECs

**What grades will I need:** 8 GCSEs grade 5 or above to study three A Levels.

**Find out more:** [www.petcheyacademy.org.uk](http://www.petcheyacademy.org.uk)

### **The Urswick School Sixth Form**

**What is it:** School sixth form

**Where is it:** Hackney Central

**Ofsted rating:** Good

**What can I study there:** 19 A Levels including Politics, Drama & Theatre Studies, Spanish and Economics. Also BTEC in Sport.

**What grades will I need:** Grade 4 or higher in a minimum of 5 GCSE subjects

**Find out more:** [www.theurswickschool.co.uk](http://www.theurswickschool.co.uk)

### **Waltham Forest College**

**What is it:** Further Education College

**Where is it:** Walthamstow

**Ofsted rating:** Good

**What can I study there:** BTECs, apprenticeships, and industry-specific diplomas in areas including tourism, vehicle maintenance, construction and electrical maintenance

**What grades will I need:** Varies from course to course. You will be able to resit English and Maths GCSE if you do not obtain a pass first time.

**Find out more:** [www.waltham.ac.uk](http://www.waltham.ac.uk)

### **Westminster Kingsway College**

**What is it:** Further Education College

**Where is it:** Four locations in Kings Cross, Victoria, Soho and West Hampstead

**Ofsted rating:** Requires Improvement

**What can I study there:** vocational courses, apprenticeships and Higher Education courses in subjects including Digital Art and Photography, Construction, Health and Social Care Nursing and Midwifery. Also A Levels and T Levels

**What grades will I need:** Varies across different subjects though non-A Level subjects require lower grades.

**Find out more:** [www.westking.ac.uk](http://www.westking.ac.uk)

## Glossary

- **BTEC** stands for Business and Technology Education Council. BTECs are specialist work-related qualifications. They combine practical learning with subject and theory content.
- **CACHE** is a qualification for the care and education industry
- **EPQ** stands for Extended Project Qualification. You can take this alongside A Levels and it involves doing independent study of your choice in which you typically complete a sustained piece of writing (around 5,000 words) and give a presentation. Many Russell Group universities select students who have completed this and it is a chance to demonstrate your critical thinking abilities.
- **Facilitating subjects** are the handful of A-level subjects commonly asked for in universities' entry requirements, regardless of the course you're applying to – this makes them a good choice to keep your degree options open. They encompass: Biology, Chemistry, English, Geography, History, Maths, Modern and Classical Languages and Physics.
- **IMI Accreditation** is suitable for technicians working in a variety of sectors within the automotive industry (e.g. light vehicle or motorcycle maintenance, roadside assistance, accident repair, autoglazing, parts distribution and customer service, sales and finance and insurance etc.).
- **KS5** means the two years of education for students aged 16-18, or at sixth form, in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- **OCN Qualifications** are nationally recognised qualifications and regulated by Ofqual
- **OCR Nationals** are vocational qualifications, which are designed to teach practical workplace skills. There are three levels, with different awards in each: Levels 1 and 2, which are designed for students aged 14 and over, and Level 3 for students aged 16 and over.
- **The Russell Group** is an association of twenty-four public research universities in the United Kingdom. They represent the oldest, most established universities in the country and they have excellent resources, excellent teaching, excellent networking opportunities and produce students who are superbly equipped for the world of work. Additionally, if you're planning to do a Masters Degree later, a Russell Group university degree will stand you in good stead. Is it all it's cracked up to be? Ultimately, your day-to-day undergraduate experience will be fairly similar whatever university you choose and at the end of your course it will be your grades, your experience, your ability to present yourself well at interviews that will determine your future success. That said, a Russell Group university will definitely give your CV added sparkle, and can unlock extra opportunities, particularly in professions like politics, law and traditional media. Not only that, Russell Group graduates earn 13% more on average than their contemporaries from other universities.
- **T Levels** are new courses, each one equivalent to three A levels. T Levels offer students a mixture of classroom learning and 'on-the-job' experience during an industry placement. Currently you can take a T Level in either design, surveying and planning for construction, digital production, design and development or education and childcare
- **Vocational courses** are designed to help you learn in a practical way about a specific job area. They can help you get the skills you need to start a job, progress in a career or go on to higher education.