

## Don't let your school days be the end of a learning career

*As GCSE results are issued what opportunities are there for young people to realise their potential*

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The message to young people in Suffolk is don't let school days be the end of your learning career. It will affect your earning potential and long-term job prospects.

As young people receive their exam results they will be making decisions that will determine their future and many will be unsure of what to do next. Whether they have achieved the results they hoped for or are disappointed with their grades there is a wealth of options and support to help them.

Whichever route a young person chooses it's important that they continue to learn and gain qualifications. It's the best way to ensure a successful future in terms of career progression, salary and job security.

By 2010 very few jobs will be open to those without the minimum set of qualifications. Those with five good GCSE's (A\* to C) or an equivalent Level 2 qualification earn on average 9% more than those without and employers are more likely to invest in young people's future development and career.

Today everyone needs a minimum set of qualifications to get on in life. Without them a young person's options are limited and they could miss out on up to £4,000 a year in future earnings.

Judith Mobbs, Area Director for the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) Suffolk said: "Last year many more young people decided to continue their education after their GCSEs, and we want this trend to continue. There is a lot of competition for the best jobs and we want every young person to cash in on the financial benefits of getting more training. Some young people can't wait to leave school after their GCSEs but often they regret it later when they see their friends earning more and getting better jobs.

“The courses for 16 year olds are not at all like school. Young people can train whilst working or study full time at college or school. If they want to get into work straight away, an Apprenticeship gives the option of earning while learning. There are options for young people at all levels and an Advanced Apprenticeship can lead on to a university course. In Suffolk, 2305 young people started an Apprenticeship in 2006/07.

Money is no barrier – an education maintenance allowance (EMA) can earn an individual up to £30 per week for doing a Level 2 qualification. Young people are being urged not to let immediate financial pressures put them off further education, training or retaking their GCSEs by applying for an EMA. More than 6670 learners in the county are claiming EMA.

Entry to Employment (E2E) helps those who need further support in their development to enter the world of work and progress in their learning. It is individually designed and includes vocational knowledge and skills, career awareness and employability skills as well as opportunities for work placements and tasters. E2E is a positive option for 267 young people in Suffolk who seek and will benefit from work-based learning opportunities.

Whatever their GCSE results, there are choices for everyone, and LSC Suffolk wants to encourage as many young people as possible to stay in learning and make the most of the opportunities available for their future.

Advice and support is on hand through Connexions Personal Advisers who can help young people unsure about what their future holds, and help those who have done better than expected but need guidance on what to do next. Young people can phone or call in and see a personal adviser who will be available in schools, colleges, and Connexions centres. Not only can they talk to someone about staying in education, finding a job or starting an Apprenticeship they can get information about financial support for continuing in full time education and help with life issues. Young people in Suffolk can log onto their local Connexions at: [www.connexionssuffolk.org.uk](http://www.connexionssuffolk.org.uk) to find out more.

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## **Note to Editors**

### **Learning and Skills Council (LSC)**

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

Visit [www.lsc.gov.uk/inourhands](http://www.lsc.gov.uk/inourhands) or call 0800 011 3030.

### **Connexions**

Connexions is for young people aged 13-19, living in England and wanting advice on getting to where they want to be in life. It also provides support up to the age of 25 for young people who have learning difficulties or disabilities (or both).

Connexions is a modern public service and young people are actively involved in its design and delivery. The service is managed locally by a Local Connexions Service which brings together all the key youth support services.

For Connexions in Suffolk log onto: [www.connexionssuffolk.org.uk](http://www.connexionssuffolk.org.uk)

### **Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)**

All 16-year-olds in England from a household with an annual income of up to £30,810 who stay on at college or school are eligible for the EMA. The scheme allows payments of £10, £20 or £30 a week in return for a commitment to study. Additional benefits of up to £500 over two years are also available for meeting certain targets.

For advice and information on how to apply for the EMA call 080 810 16219 or visit the web-site <http://www.direct.gov.uk/ema> for application packs. For people with speech and hearing difficulties who use textphone, please call 0800 056 5344.

## **APPRENTICESHIPS**

- There are currently 250,000 apprentices working in over 130,000 organisations in England alone. They can choose from over 200 career paths in 80 different sectors of industry and commerce.
- Anyone aged 16 and above is eligible to complete an Apprenticeship. Apprenticeships provide individuals with a mixture of on and off-the-job training whilst being paid. For employers, Apprenticeships offer the opportunity to improve their businesses bottom line through the tailored, relevant training of highly motivated individuals. [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)
- There are two levels of Apprenticeships:
  - 'Apprenticeships', equivalent to GCSE level, incorporate a National Vocational Qualification to Level 2; key skills and in some cases a technical certificate
  - 'Advanced Apprenticeships', equivalent to A-Levels, incorporate a National Vocational Qualification to Level 3, key skills and a technical certificate
- Apprenticeship Directory: You can download a PDF of the directory at: <http://www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/EastofEngland/whatwedo/WBLEoE.htm>

### **Entry to Employment (E2E)**

E2E is an individually designed programme within an overarching framework, which will respond flexibly to meet learner's needs and will offer a range of provision including the following key elements:

Basic skills.

- Key skills.
- NVQ Level 1 or Level 2 units.
- Personal development opportunities such as inter-personal relations.
- Vocational knowledge and skills.
- Career awareness and management skills.
- Employability skills including problem solving, effective thinking, team working.
- Work placements/tasters.
- Citizenship knowledge and awareness.

E2E is further designed to facilitate the opportunity of progression. It provides a positive learning experience through recognising the extent of support and the kind of environment that young people will need to make the successful transition into their next stage of development.

Progression may be to an Apprenticeship, to other employment-based opportunities or to further vocational learning. E2E will be a positive option for young people who seek, and who will benefit from, work-based learning opportunities.

The number of learners on the E2E programme in Suffolk is 267.

### **PROSPECTUSES**

Area Prospectuses – log onto [www.learnnow.org.uk](http://www.learnnow.org.uk) (select courses) for area prospectuses that provide information to all 14-19 learners, guidance, professional and parents and guardians.