

Important information for students in Years 9 and 10

Raising the Participation Age

Raising the Participation Age (RPA) is coming into effect from summer 2013¹. If you are in Year 10 or below this affects you.

What is RPA?

The Government has changed the law to increase the age at which you are required to participate in education or training. If you are currently in **Year 10, you will have to continue in education or training until the end of the school year in which you turn 17**. If you are currently in **Year 9 or below, you will have to continue until your 18th birthday**, as the majority of young people already do.

This does not necessarily mean you have to stay on at school after Year 11 if you don't want to, as you will have a choice about how you participate, which could be through:

- Full-time education, such as school or college;
- an Apprenticeship;
- Part-time education or training if you are employed, self employed or volunteering for 20 hours or more a week.

Advice and guidance on the full range of options open to you will be available through your school, as well as the young people's careers helpline and online resources. Talk to your teachers about accessing face-to-face advice if you want some help thinking through the pros and cons of different options.

Why are we making this change?

Most young people already continue their learning when they leave school. This is because it gives you the best chance to gain the skills and qualifications you'll need to help you achieve in whatever you go on to do – whether that's a job or further study. It will significantly increase your prospects for future employment and the amount you are likely to earn over your lifetime.

RPA will mean that all young people are given the opportunity, provision and support they need to learn and participate after age 16.

Where can I find out more?

More information on RPA is available at <http://education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/participation/rpa>

¹ RPA will take effect from the last day of the academic year in summer 2013 – young people with an offer of a place, are not expected to participate until the start date of their course i.e. in most instances the September following the summer break.

Information on your options after 16 is available at
<http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/14To19/OptionsAt16/index.htm>

More information on apprenticeships is available at
<http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/About-Us/National-Apprenticeship-Service.aspx>

The young people's careers helpline is available from 8.00am to 10pm, seven days a week, telephone **0800 100 900**, or for text messages on **0776 641 3219**.