

Raising the Participation Age (RPA) – Information for young people

What is RPA?

The vast majority of 16 and 17 year olds already choose to continue in education or training. The Government is increasing the age at which everyone needs to do so. If you are in **Year 11 in September 2012, you will need to continue in education or training until at least the end of the school year in which you turn 17**. If you are in **Year 10 or below, you will need to continue until at least your 18th birthday**, as most people already do.

RPA is not about raising the school leaving age. You will be able to participate through a range of options:

- Full-time education, such as school or college;
- An Apprenticeship; or
- 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 National Careers Service – contact details are below. Talk to your teachers about accessing advice if you want some help thinking through the pros and cons of different options.

Why are you changing things?

Most young people already take part in some form of education and training after they leave school, because it gives you the best chance to get the skills and qualifications that Universities and employers are looking for.

Evidence shows that if you get qualifications at this age, it can help you to earn more over your whole lifetime – on average, young people with 2 or more A-Levels earn around 14% more than those without.

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?

Your school is responsible for securing independent and impartial careers guidance for every student in Years 9-11 on the full range of post-16 education and training options, including Apprenticeships. You can talk to your teachers about what guidance is available.

You can find out more information about RPA at:

<http://education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/participation/rpa>

More information on Apprenticeships is available at:

<http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/About-Us/National-Apprenticeship-Service.aspx>

The National Careers Service makes it easy to find information about education, training and work with professional, impartial advice. The website is <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>. You can get advice from an adviser by contacting the helpline which is available from 8.00am to 10pm, seven days a week on **0800 100 900**, or for text messages on **07766 413 219**.