

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

What is RPA?

The Government has changed the law so that from start of the 2013/14 academic year, all young people are required to continue in education or training:

- Until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17.
- From summer 2015 this will be until their 18th birthday.

The information here will help you to understand what this means for you.

If you left Year 11 in summer 2013, 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.

This does not necessarily mean that you have to stay in school, and there are a number of options that you can choose:

- Full-time study in a school, college or with a training provider.
- Full-time work or volunteering combined with part-time education or training.
- An Apprenticeship (www.apprenticeships.org.uk).

Why have you changed things?

We want to encourage you to participate because of the benefits it will bring. The vast majority of 16 and 17 year-olds already choose to continue in education or training after school because it gives them the best chance to get the skills and knowledge that Universities and employers are looking for. Those young people who continue in education or training after they reach 16 are more likely to achieve higher qualifications, which helps them earn more over their lifetime – on average, young people with 2 or more A-Levels earn around 14% more than those without.

Can I work full-time?

You will still be able to work full-time if you want to, or volunteer or even set up your own business. But you will also need to undertake part-time training, or study in order to meet the duty to participate – this will allow you to get accredited qualifications.

Is there any financial support to help me participate?

You can receive financial support to help with essential education-related costs like transport to your school or college, a lunchtime meal or any equipment for your course through the 16-19 Bursary fund. You can find out more about the 16-19 Bursary Fund here: <http://tinyurl.com/ck6kr5v>.

If I get a summer job, can I only apply for a part-time course at college?

You are of course free to take a summer job and then go onto to a full-time course from September. But, if you decide to continue in full-time work you will need to combine that with part-time study.

Where can I find out more?

Your school can provide information on the various options open to you, or will direct you to the appropriate service in your area. The **National Careers Service** can provide impartial advice by webchat, text or telephone by visiting <http://tinyurl.com/cj3ydyI> or calling 0800 100 900. The line is open from 8am to 10pm. Calls are free from a landline and if you call from a mobile an adviser can ring you back so you won't get charged.

You can find further information at the links below:

Raising the Participation Age - www.education.gov.uk/rpa

Apprenticeships - <http://tinyurl.com/dxbh7r>

For information on other types of financial support available, you can visit: <http://tinyurl.com/cyes8np>.