



   #TimeToShine

# PARENT GUIDE

**2017**

 Sunderland College

 SUNDERLAND  
SIXTH FORM



# INTRODUCTION

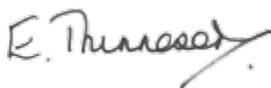
As a parent, carer or guardian, you'll understand that a good education plays a major role in shaping your child's future. Making the choice about where to study after Year 11 is one of the biggest decisions that they will have to make, and we know that you will play an important role in this decision.

At both Sunderland College and Sunderland Sixth Form, your child's best interests are fundamental and you can trust us to provide a welcoming environment for your son or daughter; where the learning is both interesting and highly effective.

Whether your child chooses to study A-Levels or a professional and technical pathway with one of our many courses or Apprenticeship programmes, you can be assured of our high teaching standards and excellent results which students achieve year on year.

We understand that you're bound to have lots of questions about this important step in your child's development and this guide aims to answer these for you.

However if you do have any further questions about the college and the courses we offer, please do not hesitate to contact us on **0191 511 6000** and we will be happy to help you further.



Ellen Thinnesen  
Principal

# WHY SHOULD YOUR CHILD CHOOSE US?

Deciding what to do after completing their GCSEs will be one of the biggest decisions that your child will have to make and there are a host of options available to them including school sixth forms, college sixth forms, vocational colleges and training providers. So why should your child choose to study with us?

The quality of our education and the support we provide to our students is paramount to us. We pride ourselves on this and our success speaks for itself.

We have held a 99% pass rate for the past eight years and have an impressive number of students securing places at top universities including Oxford, Cambridge, Newcastle and Durham.

- 25 of our A-Level subjects have a 100% pass rate
- Many of our vocational programmes have a 100% pass rate
- We received a 'Good' Ofsted inspection in June 2016
- We have a proven track record for our A-Level results
- We have the widest range of A-Level and Professional and Technical courses in the city
- We are one of the largest trainers and suppliers of apprentices in the region
- We have been awarded the Matrix, National Quality Mark for Advice and Guidance four times in a row
- We have invested in excess of £50 million in our facilities, ensuring your child is being taught in state-of-the-art industry standard environments
- We have highly qualified teaching staff with years of experience, with many of them having worked in industry



# LEAVING SCHOOL AFTER YEAR 11

Government changes mean that your child must now stay in education and training until they are 18. However this does not mean that they must stay at school until they are 18.

They can choose one of the following options which best suits their needs and future aspirations:

- Full-time education - at a school, sixth form or college
- Work based learning - an Apprenticeship or Traineeship
- Part-time education or training if they are employed, self-employed or volunteering for 20 hours or more a week

## **FINDING THE RIGHT COURSE TYPE**

There are three pathways that your child can take with us:

- A-Levels at Sunderland Sixth Form
- Professional and Technical (Vocational)
- Apprenticeships and Traineeships

## **A-LEVELS AT SUNDERLAND SIXTH FORM**

These are academic based qualifications where your child will study three or four subjects, over two years at Sunderland Sixth Form.

We offer the widest choice of A-Level subjects in the city, and include similar ones to those that they may have studied at school for example, English and Mathematics. However, we also offer a range of different subjects including Performing Arts, Psychology, Criminology and Government and Politics.

Most students who choose A-Levels intend to go on to university, but your child may opt to then progress into employment or an adult Apprenticeship upon completion.

If your child wants to go to university, they may wish to choose one of the 'facilitating' subjects which are the recommended subjects to maximise university progression as listed below:

- Biology
- Chemistry
- English Literature
- Further Mathematics
- Geography
- History
- Mathematics
- Physics

For your child to study on our A-Level courses at Sunderland Sixth Form they will need to have at least five GCSEs at grade A\*-C or grades 5 to 9, including Mathematics and English. If they do not have an A\*-C or grades 5 to 9, in Mathematics and English we will discuss how we can support them during their A-Level programme to achieve this. Mathematics and English GCSEs at grade A\*-C or grades 5 to 9, are required to progress to university.

You may be aware that A-Levels are being re-developed between 2015 -2018. The changes include new forms of assessment for the new A-Levels and also AS qualifications no longer counting towards the final A-Level grade. We are happy to discuss how the changes affect each subject with you at one of our Open Events.

You can see the full range of our A-Level courses at [sunderlandsixthform.ac.uk](http://sunderlandsixthform.ac.uk).

## PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL

Professional and Technical, or Vocational courses are ideal if your child already has a career in mind and wants to learn those specific skills. If they don't like everything to depend on one exam and prefer to complete written work all year, then vocational courses are ideal as they combine assignment-based assessments and shorter exams throughout the course.

Here at Sunderland College, we have almost 100 courses to choose from, designed to develop your child's skills in a particular subject for example, Care, Beauty Therapy, Engineering or Sport.

Your child can study across a range of levels and progress to the next as they achieve, so there is a vocational course for everyone.

If your child doesn't achieve GCSEs in Mathematics and English at A\*-C or grades 4 to 9, they will be required to continue studying these subjects. Mathematics and English GCSEs at grade A\*-C or grades 4 to 9, are required by most employers for them to secure that all important first job.

Details of our Professional and Technical courses can be found at [sunderlandcollege.ac.uk/professionalandtechnical](http://sunderlandcollege.ac.uk/professionalandtechnical).

# APPRENTICESHIPS

If your child is looking to get 'on the job' experience with mainly practical assessments, then an Apprenticeship is ideal for them.

Apprenticeships are a great way for your child to build up their skills and knowledge in a real working environment. Through our Apprenticeship programme, they can gain qualifications, vital work experience and earn money at the same time.

We offer a broad range of Apprenticeship frameworks covering a variety of industries including:

- Accounting
- Barbering
- Beauty Therapy
- Bricklaying
- Business Administration
- Catering and Hospitality
- Childcare
- Children's and Young Peoples Workforce
- Cleaning and Environment Services
- Customer Services
- Electrical
- Engineering
- Hairdressing
- Health and Social Care
- IT
- Joinery
- Management
- Motor Mechanics and Motor Vehicle Body and Paintwork
- Painting and Decorating
- Performing Arts
- Plastering
- Sports Coaching
- Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools
- Team Leading
- Visual Arts

All of our Apprenticeships are also backed by our support team, offering both your child and their employer assistance throughout their training, making sure they both benefit from the programme.

To start an Apprenticeship your child will need to be over 16 and not taking part in full time education. For more information about our Apprenticeships call the Apprenticeship Team on **0191 511 6484** or email **[apprenticeships@sunderlandcollege.ac.uk](mailto:apprenticeships@sunderlandcollege.ac.uk)**.



# A GUIDE TO COURSE LEVELS

**6**

**5**

**4**

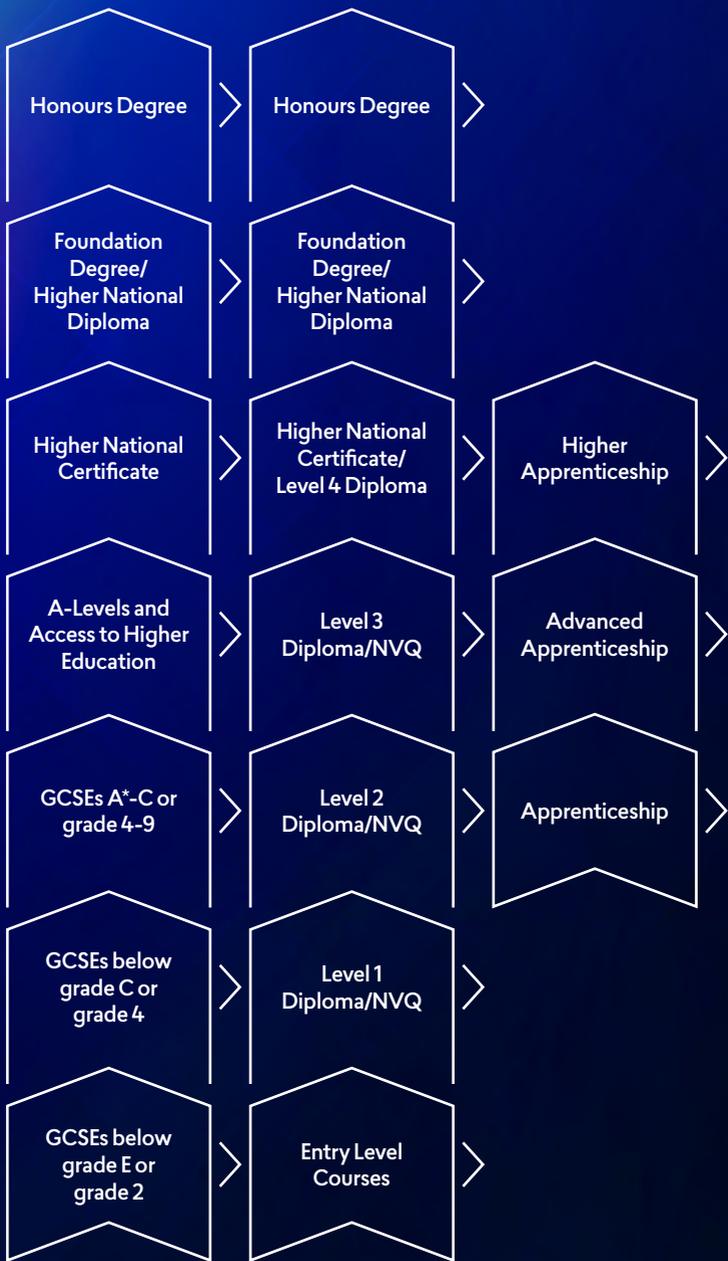
**3**

**2**

**1**

**ENTRY**

Qualification Level



**General Route**

**Vocational Route**

**Apprenticeship Route**

**EMPLOYMENT**

## **SHOULD I CHOOSE SUNDERLAND SIXTH FORM OR SCHOOL FOR MY CHILD?**

# **OUR ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS**

### **THE RESULTS ARE BETTER AT A SCHOOL SIXTH FORM, IS THIS TRUE?**

We've achieved a 99% pass rate for eight years in a row. We are ambitious for all of our learners and pride ourselves on setting high standards of expectations for both them and all of our staff.

### **IF MY CHILD GOES TO A SCHOOL SIXTH FORM ARE THEY MORE LIKELY TO GO TO A TOP UNIVERSITY?**

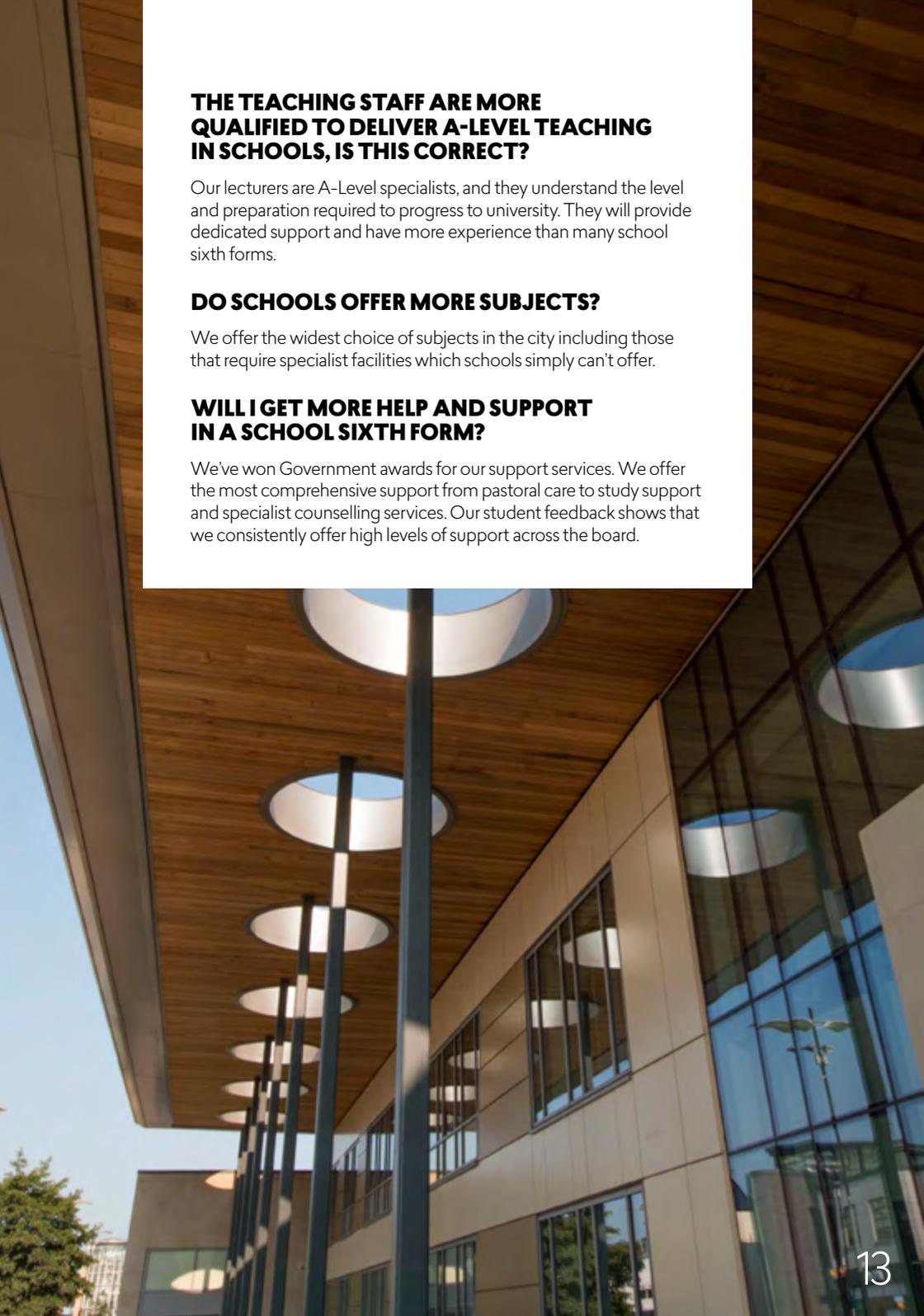
We help and support our students with their university applications and the percentage of our A-Level students securing these sought after places is consistently above the regional average.

Our High Achievers' programme has been tailored to meet the needs of our gifted and talented students. It focuses on developing your son's or daughter's skills and talents in the classroom as well as through specialised workshops and visits.

Some benefits of the programme are:

- Four A-Level subject choices
- Talks, workshops, shadowing and summer schools
- Dedicated tutor groups
- Preparation for university entrance
- Focused progress interviews with their tutor
- Careers in medicine workshops
- Thinking skills sessions
- Awards evening
- Extended Project Qualification - enabling your child to achieve an additional qualification to support their UCAS application
- Cultural visits
- Help with university visits

We offer the High Achievers' programme to those students with predominantly A\*-B at GCSE or grades 6 to 9, although if your son and daughter does not have these grades they may be able to opt into the programme at a later date if they are progressing well with their studies.



## **THE TEACHING STAFF ARE MORE QUALIFIED TO DELIVER A-LEVEL TEACHING IN SCHOOLS, IS THIS CORRECT?**

Our lecturers are A-Level specialists, and they understand the level and preparation required to progress to university. They will provide dedicated support and have more experience than many school sixth forms.

## **DO SCHOOLS OFFER MORE SUBJECTS?**

We offer the widest choice of subjects in the city including those that require specialist facilities which schools simply can't offer.

## **WILL I GET MORE HELP AND SUPPORT IN A SCHOOL SIXTH FORM?**

We've won Government awards for our support services. We offer the most comprehensive support from pastoral care to study support and specialist counselling services. Our student feedback shows that we consistently offer high levels of support across the board.

# WORKING TOGETHER

Moving from school to sixth form or college is a big step for both your child and yourself as a parent, carer or guardian. Here at Sunderland College and at Sunderland Sixth Form, we aim to make the transition as easy as possible and believe that this is enhanced through a close partnership with parents, carers and guardians.

Prior to your child joining us, we encourage you to come along together to our Open Events, to speak with our experienced staff and ensure all your questions are answered.

Studying here with us provides your child with greater independence and responsibility for their own learning and academic progress, however both our support and your support still plays a key role in helping them reach their maximum potential.

Your child will be assigned a progression coach/tutor, who they will meet with every week. They will review how they are progressing with their studies, provide support and help them deal with any problems should they arise. The progression coach/tutor will be the first point of contact for your child if they have any concerns whatsoever and will be their contact throughout their time at college. This progression coach/tutor can be contacted by yourself, should you have any concerns about your child.

In addition, we'll keep in touch with you in relation to your child's progress through:

- Progress review - these take place internally every term and you will be sent the outcomes of these discussions
- Parent Portal - Sunderland College uses an online system called ProMonitor to help us support all of our students throughout their programmes of study. Parents, carers and guardians also have the opportunity to use this online system through Parent Portal
- With Parent Portal you can log in and view your son's or daughter's progress including Individual Learning Plans, check their record of attendance and punctuality, keep up to date with any targets that may have been set for them by their lecturers or tutor and also view the marks or grades they've achieved for their assessments
- Termly parents' evenings

In establishing a close partnership with yourselves, you can help us by:

- Supporting your child in their studies at home
- Supporting your child's attendance and punctuality at college
- Attending parents' evenings and other college events
- Regularly reviewing your child's progress on Parent Portal
- Informing us of any changes to personal circumstances or key information e.g. change of address
- Providing feedback on how we can improve

### **Our promise to your child:**

- As a student, they can expect clear information, advice and guidance about the courses and the services we offer
- As a student, they can expect a high quality teaching and learning experience
- As a student, they can expect help and support to meet their individual needs to help them succeed
- As a student, they can expect access to opportunities to participate and be heard
- As a student, they can expect us to work with them to put things right, in the unlikely event that things go wrong

The college's values are at the heart of what we do; we aim to inspire, operate with integrity and adaptability, be innovative and professional. We expect everyone to behave in a safe, healthy, tolerant and responsible manner.

## **ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT**

We place a strong emphasis on attendance and punctuality, with registers marked at the start of every class.

If your son or daughter is going to be absent for any reason, parents, carers or guardians are asked to contact the college on **0191 511 6000** as soon as possible on every day of their absence.

If your son or daughter is absent from class and we haven't been notified by yourselves, we will send you a text message to make you aware that they are not in class.

# THE STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The Student Code of Conduct has been developed to ensure our students share in the responsibility of creating an environment in which everyone can learn and enjoy their time with us, including both staff and students, and that we can all work together in safety.

At Sunderland College and Sunderland Sixth Form, students are asked to agree to:

- Attend regularly and punctually and take part fully in all lessons and activities on their learning plans
- Wear their student identity card and lanyard at all times as proof of enrolment
- Meet deadlines for handing in work
- Review progress regularly with staff
- Treat all staff, students and facilities with respect
- Do as much as they can to achieve as much as they can while at college/sixth form
- Behave in a manner that shows consideration for other users of the college/sixth form, and for the educational purposes of the institution



# LEARNING SUPPORT

If you feel that your child may need additional support to help them at college, our specialist Learning Support Team are here to assist them every step of the way.

You and your child may be asked to attend a meeting with a member of staff from the Learning Support Team to find out what extra support would be most suitable.

We provide a wide range of specialist support including:

- Specialist personal development support (e.g. for specific learning difficulties such as Dyslexia; Visual Impairment; Autism Spectrum)
- Additional tutorial support
- Support for mental health
- Educational Psychologist assessment/meetings
- Specialist arrangements for examinations
- Personal care
- Portable loop systems
- Teaching materials in alternative formats, e.g. Braille, large or audio tape
- Help from communicators, readers and Learning Mentors
- Help with access and mobility

If you would like to know more about our learning support services call **0191 511 6000** or email **[michael.hall@sunderlandcollege.ac.uk](mailto:michael.hall@sunderlandcollege.ac.uk)**.

## ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Here at Sunderland College and Sunderland Sixth Form, we have an award winning Advice and Guidance Team at each of our campuses to provide both prospective and current students with specialised information and guidance so that your child understands all of the options available to them.

They are available to provide your child with:

- Help with the move from school to college or sixth form
- Information on all college and sixth form courses
- Guidance to assist your child's transition into employment, training or higher education, following completion of their college or sixth form course
- Advice on support available for anyone with a disability, a learning difficulty or financial support

If you would like to arrange a face to face appointment with the Advice and Guidance Team, call **0191 511 6000**.

## YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

We offer comprehensive support for students who may face particular difficulties or barriers in attending college or sixth form.

Our counselling service offers emotional support to all of our students as well as specialist staff dealing with a range of welfare support issues.

We also have a team of nurses who can provide support and advice on a range of health-related issues as well as external agencies who work with the college and sixth form for extra support. Further information about health issues can be found online at **[www.yourhealthsunderland.com](http://www.yourhealthsunderland.com)**.

For further information contact our Welfare Team on **0191 511 6000**.

# WHAT FINANCIAL SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE?

If you're worried about the cost of coming to College or Sixth Form then help may be at hand with our bursary scheme which is designed to help those most in need of financial assistance.



# 16-18 BURSARY

## ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A bursary worth £1,200 a year will be available to assist with travel and other costs, in the following circumstances where the student is:

- Living in Care or a Care Leaver
- Claiming Income Support or Universal Credit in their own right
- Claiming Employment and Support Allowance together with Personal Independence Payment or Disability Living Allowance in their own right

All other students will be eligible to receive financial support with help towards travel costs and essential kit if the household income is less than £25,000 a year and they live more than 1/2 mile from their centre of study.

Payments will be made on a monthly basis subject to satisfactory attendance, progress and conduct. Students are expected to achieve excellent attendance on their full programme of study in order that payment can be made.

For further information about the 16-18 Bursary contact our Welfare Team on **0191 511 6000**.

## FREE MEALS SCHEME

Free meals will be issued to eligible students worth £2.41 per day for any student whose parent(s)/guardian(s) or themselves are in receipt of any of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Jobseekers Allowance (Income Based)
- Employment and Support Allowance (Income Related)
- Pension Credit (Minimum Guarantee)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit only, provided they have an annual income, as assessed by the Inland Revenue that does not exceed £16,190. (Claimants in receipt of Working Tax Credit together with Child Tax Credit are not eligible for meal support)
- Universal Credit (during the initial roll out of benefit)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

In addition, students eligible for free meals can also access a free breakfast at main College campuses, up to the value of £1 a day. No cash alternative is available.

# THE NEXT STEPS

## VISIT US

Come and visit us at one of our Open Events. They provide the opportunity for you to come and see the facilities, speak with our highly experienced teaching staff, meet existing students and see what life at Sunderland College would be like for your son or daughter. We also offer a 'fast track' interview\* during Open Evenings to secure your enrolment for 2017.

### Autumn Term

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Monday 3rd October - Bede Campus - 4.30pm - 6.30pm

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Monday 10th October - Bede Campus - 4.30pm - 6.30pm

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Tuesday 11th October - City Campus - 4.30pm - 6.30pm

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Monday 21st November - Bede Campus - 4.30pm - 6.30pm

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Tuesday 22nd November - City Campus - 4.30pm - 6.30pm

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### Spring Term

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Monday 16th January - Bede Campus - 4.30pm - 6.30pm

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Tuesday 17th January - City Campus - 4.30pm - 6.30pm

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### Summer Term

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Monday 6th March - Bede Campus - 4.30pm - 6.30pm

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Tuesday 14th March - City Campus - 4.30pm - 6.30pm

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Tuesday 2nd May - City Campus - 4.30pm - 6.30pm

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Monday 8th May - Bede Campus - 4.30pm - 6.30pm

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*\* For Professional and Technical Courses*

If you have seen all you need to see and are ready to apply to join us, you can do this in the following ways:

## **ONLINE**

To apply for Sunderland College, please visit **[sunderlandcollege.ac.uk/apply](https://sunderlandcollege.ac.uk/apply)**.

To apply for Sunderland Sixth Form please visit **[sunderlandsixthform.ac.uk](https://sunderlandsixthform.ac.uk)**.

## **AT AN OPEN EVENT**

Come along to our Open Events and apply there and then.

## **WHAT HAPPENS ONCE I'VE APPLIED?**

Once your application form has been received, by post or online, we'll acknowledge this within three working days. If you are applying to study at Sunderland Sixth Form, you will be invited in for an interview.

If you would like to arrange an appointment to discuss your options, call our Admissions Team on **0191 511 6260**, otherwise, subject to meeting the entry requirements, you'll be invited along to enrol in the summer.

## **CONTACT US**

We're always happy to hear from parents, carers and guardians and there are a number of different ways you can get in touch:

Call us on **0191 511 6000**

Send us an email to **[enquiries@sunderlandcollege.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@sunderlandcollege.ac.uk)**

Visit our Facebook page **[www.facebook.com/sunderlandcollege](https://www.facebook.com/sunderlandcollege)**

Contact us through Twitter **[@sunderlandcol](https://twitter.com/sunderlandcol)**

Visit our website **[sunderlandcollege.ac.uk](https://sunderlandcollege.ac.uk)**

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