Some young people will decide to look for full-time work straight after leaving school. However, finding work when you have little or no experience can be very difficult, and young people might well need help.

The main services offering advice and support to young people seeking work are:

¢ Connexions — help for young people over 16 to find work locally. They can also find details about types of jobs and the skills needed to do them in the Jobs4U careers database. For more information, visit connexions-direct.com

¢ New Deal for young people — help for 18- to 24-year-olds to find and keep a job. A personal adviser will help them look at what they can do and build on the skills they have. For more information, visit jobcentreplus.gov.uk

3 Higher Apprenticeships
Higher apprentices work towards a work-based learning qualification such as NVQ Level 4 and, in some cases, a knowledge-based qualification such as a Foundation degree.

There are more than 180 types of Apprenticeships available across more than 80 industry sectors. These include everything from accountancy to veterinary nursing, from plumbing to environmental conservation.

Searching and applying for Apprenticeship places is now easy with the new Apprenticeship Vacancies matching system. This is a user-friendly web portal where employers can advertise their vacancies and candidates can apply for them online, making the process easier on all sides.

For more information on Apprenticeships, visit apprenticeships.org.uk

Apprenticeships
Apprentices learn on the job, building up knowledge and skills, gaining qualifications and earning money all at the same time. There are three levels of Apprenticeship available for those aged 16 and over.

1 Apprenticeships (equivalent to five good GCSE passes)
Apprentices work towards work-based learning qualifications such as NVQ Level 2, key skills and, in some cases, a relevant knowledge-based qualification such as a BTEC. These provide the skills needed for the job and allow entry to:

2 Advanced Apprenticeships (equivalent to two A-level passes)
Advanced apprentices work towards work-based learning qualifications such as NVQ Level 3, key skills and, in most cases, a relevant knowledge-based certificate such as a BTEC. To start this programme, you should ideally have five GCSEs (grade C or above) or have completed an Apprenticeship.

Getting a full-time job
Some young people will decide to look for full-time work straight after leaving school. However, finding work when you have little or no experience can be very difficult, and young people might well need help.

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For more information, visit
connexions-direct.com

For more information, visit
jobcentreplus.gov.uk

“I think it's really important to do something that you really enjoy.”
Activity ideas

¢ Invite your local Connexions adviser or careers adviser to give a presentation to students on their post-16 options.

¢ Distribute Worksheet 1. Ask students to tick the boxes that best describe their preferences and then look up their scores on the other side of the sheet to give them an idea of the options open to them.

¢ Ask students to follow up the DVD by researching and planning their post-16 options. They could do this in the careers library or using online resources such as connexions.gov.uk or fasttomato.com.

¢ Invite former students into class to talk about their experiences in further education, work-based learning and sixth forms.

¢ Find out if there are careers conventions, sixth form open evenings or jobfinder events taking place locally that students may like to attend.

¢ Talk to students about their individual learning plans.

¢ Brainstorm or mind-map post-16 options and routes (this can be done as an individual, paired or group activity).

¢ Distribute worksheet 2. Ask students to complete the quiz.

¢ Divide students into pairs or small groups and ask them to identify and discuss three or four advantages of sixth form learning, college learning and work-based learning. Are there any disadvantages they can see? Pool the findings and discuss as a class.

¢ Review and compare prospectuses or other marketing material from local learning providers.

¢ Use the DVD to talk through different experiences of post-16 options.

Getting help and support with post-16 options

If students are still wondering what sort of learning is right for them, there are plenty of different sources of information. Some of these are highlighted on the DVD.

There are lots of different services young people can go to for help and support with making difficult decisions about their future. School and home are just the start of it.

Family

Parents, siblings and friends are often a good place to start when looking for help. They know the young person, and more often than not have got experience of both education and working life.

Teachers

Teachers can help students work out what it is they want to do in the future. They will give advice based on their knowledge of the student, the options that are available, and of life post-school.

Careers adviser

Most schools have a careers adviser who can help students make decisions about their future. They also have information about local schools, colleges and Apprenticeship schemes, and know what qualifications are needed for what careers.

Connexions personal adviser

Connexions personal advisers support 13- to 19-year-olds who want advice on getting to where they want to be in life. They can give information, advice and practical help with all sorts of things that might be affecting young people at school, college, work or in their personal or family life.

For more information on Connexions, visit connexions-direct.com
For many students, even those who want to carry on in education, lack of money puts them off continuing learning. This is where Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) comes in. It could make a post-16 learning option more affordable.

Although EMA is not available to all students, it is important that every student knows about it so that they can make choices about their future for themselves.

This section looks at EMA, who can apply and how. It also discusses how to open a bank account, a requirement for EMA, and talks about filling out the EMA application form.

About EMA

Whatever course a young person decides to do, EMA can help.

What is EMA?

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is a cash payment of up to £30 a week to help students continue in learning. If they’re 16, 17 or 18 and have left, or are about to leave, compulsory education, then it could be for them. It could spell fewer money worries, leaving students time to get on with their studies. See the DVD for students’ personal stories of how EMA helped them.

Whatever course young people decide to do, EMA could help with the cost of books, travel, equipment or anything else that would help them to continue in education.

Who can claim EMA?

Students can claim EMA if they are:

¢ 16, 17 or 18 and in or about to leave, or have already left, compulsory education
¢ thinking of starting a full-time further education course at a college or school, a Diploma, a course that leads to an Apprenticeship, or an Entry to Employment (e2e) programme, and
¢ their annual household income is below £30,810 (for tax year 2008/09).

Students could also be eligible if they’re a young parent (under 20) and want to start or continue in learning. In this case, they might also be able to get help with childcare costs from Care to Learn.

For more information on Care to Learn, visit direct.gov.uk/caretolearn

Students who are doing an Apprenticeship and earning a salary will not be eligible for EMA.

How much will they get?

EMA comes in weekly payments of £10, £20 or £30 which go directly into the student’s bank account – though only if they attend and do well on their course. The amount they get is calculated by looking at how much money is coming into their household.

If the learner is starting an LSC-funded e2e course they will automatically be eligible for the maximum £30 weekly EMA payment regardless of their household income.

‘Household income’ does not include any money the student earns from part-time work. EMA does not affect any other household benefits that parents or carers may receive.

On top of the weekly amount, students can also receive bonuses – but only if they continue to do well and meet targets set by their teacher, tutor or provider when they start.
Students must have a bank, building society or Post Office account in their name before they can apply for EMA.

How do they apply?

They can get an EMA application form by phoning 0800 121 8999. Forms may also be available from schools, colleges, learning providers or Connexions personal advisers.

Once the application form has been completed, the student’s parent or carer will need to provide evidence of the household income for the relevant tax year. This might be the Tax Credit Award Notice (TC602) or P60.

Once the application has been processed, students will be sent a Notice of Entitlement (NoE). This will confirm the weekly amount the student will receive.

The student should take the NoE to their school, college or learning provider on the day they start their course or programme. They will also need to sign an EMA agreement with their school, college or learning provider which sets out what is expected of them in terms of attendance, behaviour, coursework and progress.

Helping out after college or sixth form

EMA can also benefit students after they have left school or college. If students get EMA and go on to university within the next three years, they could qualify for the Higher Education Student Support Guarantee. This means they will be guaranteed the maximum maintenance grant while at university to help with their living costs.

Getting a bank account for EMA

EMA is paid directly into the student’s bank account and they don’t have to pay it back.

It is essential that anyone who applies for EMA has a bank, building society or Post Office account, as the money is paid directly into the student’s account, not to their parents’ or their school or college. Some students don’t apply for EMA because they don’t have a bank account.

Activity ideas

¢ Distribute the EMA leaflet ‘My EMA, my choice’.
¢ Encourage students to visit the EMA website at direct.gov.uk/ema.
¢ Distribute worksheet 4. Ask students to answer the questions on EMA. You can also do this by having a group discussion.
¢ Use the DVD to inform a discussion about EMA, what it is and who can apply.
¢ Ask students to design a poster to tell people about EMA and to encourage them to apply.
¢ Encourage students to design a poster to tell people about EMA and to encourage them to apply.
¢ The DVD shows real-life examples of people who have received EMA. Discuss the different ways EMA has helped them.
¢ Encourage students to order their own copy of the DVD and take it home to watch with their parents or carers.
¢ Encourage students to visit the Financial Services Authority (FSA) website, moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk for impartial advice on choosing and opening a bank account.

Activity ideas

¢ Distribute a map of your local area. Ask students to mark on the location of banks, building societies and a Post Office where they could open an account.
¢ Distribute worksheet 5. Ask students to put the statements into the right order.
¢ Encourage students to visit local banks, building societies and a Post Office to collect information on bank accounts. Pool all the materials.
¢ Discuss the choice of bank accounts available to young people locally.
¢ Encourage students to visit the Financial Services Authority (FSA) website, moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk for impartial advice on choosing and opening a bank account.

‘Without EMA I would never have got the chance to experience college life.’
“If I need books for school, I’ll spend it on that. If not, I’ll spend it on clothes!”

No one likes to fill out forms, but if students want £30 that’s what they’ll have to do. Plus, it’s really simple.

Filling out application forms can be confusing and daunting to a lot of people, and this is another reason why many students don’t apply for EMA. In reality, the form is quite straightforward.

The EMA application form is available to order free to schools, colleges, Connexions, learning providers and individuals. Visit direct.gov.uk/ema or call 0800 121 8989 for the Learner Support helpline or 0845 600 7979 for the Learner Support provider helpline.

“Table: The EMA application process may change during the year. Students should check the website for up-to-date application information.

Activity ideas
- Distribute worksheet 6. Ask students to list their top 10 tips for filling out forms. For a more supported approach, offer an initial five points to start students off.
  - Plan ahead to make sure you have enough time to complete the form before the deadline.
  - Read the form through (including any guidance notes) before you begin to fill it in.
  - Use a black pen, and write in block capital letters.
  - Use post-it notes to mark areas of the form where you need more information. Remove the notes when you’ve completed that section.
  - Always check your form thoroughly before you send it off.

- Look at the EMA application form. Ask your students to fill in Part A, using the top tips worksheet as a guide.
- Ask students to take the EMA forms home and try to complete them with the help of their parents or carers.
- Discuss common mistakes made on forms and how they could be avoided. Here are some examples:
  - Providing incorrect information
  - Forgetting to enclose requested documentation
  - Giving incorrect or missing bank details
  - Forgetting to sign the application form.
- Encourage students to use the EMA helpline if they need extra help to complete their application form.

“T wouldn’t be in education if I didn’t get EMA.”

Note: The EMA application process may change during the year. Students should check the website for up-to-date application information.
Writing a CV

Getting an interview can depend solely on the quality of a CV, so it’s important that the applicant gets it right.

A good CV is a first step through the door. It’s an applicant’s chance to show an institution or employer they’ve got the skills and personality needed, and that they’re the right person for the job.

Activity ideas

- Ask your students what hobbies or leisure interests they have. Discuss how these can illustrate skills and experience relevant to the workplace.
- Distribute worksheet 7. Ask students to write a CV based on the sample.

Interviews

A good CV may mean an interview — and that’s an applicant’s chance to shine.

An interview is a discussion between an applicant and a learning provider or employer to find out if they are suitable for the course or the job. But it’s not just about the interviewer asking the applicant questions. Interviews also provide an opportunity for the applicant to ask the interviewer questions to find out if it’s really what they’re looking for.

Activity ideas

- Distribute worksheet 8. Ask students to get into pairs. Get one student to take on the role of interviewer and the other to answer the questions. When they have finished, ask them to swap roles and repeat the exercise. Afterwards discuss the experience as a group.
- Distribute worksheet 9, a checklist of do’s and don’ts at interview.

For more information on writing a CV, visit careersadvice.direct.gov.uk/helpwithyourcareer/writecv/
If your students need further support on their post-16 options, they can:

- order a copy of the DVD to take home and watch with their parents or carers
- talk to their Connexions personal adviser or schools careers adviser
- ring the Learner Support helpline on 0800 121 8989, or
- visit the EMA website at direct.gov.uk/ema.