



TOOTHILL
COLLEGE

Applying to Toot Hill College:
Frequently Asked Questions

Thank you for your interest in applying to Toot Hill College for a September 2017 start.

Deciding where to continue your education is an incredibly important decision; it is for this reason we have written the following booklet to try and provide you with as much information and advice as possible.

We hope you find this helpful, and we hope to see you at our Toot Hill College Open Evening on Tuesday 8th November 2016, either in the first session 6.30-7.30pm, or the second session 7.30 – 8.30pm. If you are unable to make it, please go to the 'College Noticeboard' section of our website, where all resources from the evening have been uploaded for you to view.

*Mrs. Sarah Fox
Head of College*

Please see below for information regarding the following frequently asked questions when applying to Toot Hill College:

Frequently asked questions:

1. [What are the Toot Hill College entry requirements?](#)
2. [Which different types of courses are offered at Toot Hill College and how do they compare?](#)
3. [How many courses will students select to study in Year 12 at Toot Hill College and why?](#)
4. [What advice can we give students to help them select appropriate courses?](#)
5. [How and when do students make an application to Toot Hill College?](#)
6. [Given my GCSE Results profile, what have students tended to study in the past and where have they tended to go after Toot Hill College?](#)

1. What are the Toot Hill College Entry Requirements?

Toot Hill College has both general entry requirements that **all** students are required to meet in order to study at Toot Hill College, as well as course specific entry requirements for **specific courses**.

Toot Hill College General Entry requirements:

Toot Hill College will have the following general entry requirements for all students who wish to study with us from September 2017 onwards:

- A '5' or above in English Language*
- A '5' or above in Mathematics*
- At least 2 Bs (or '6's) and 3 Cs (or '5's) overall.*

*Please be aware that as of September 2017, English and Mathematics GCSEs are switching nationally from grades expressed as letters A - F, to grades expressed as numbers 9 – 1. All other GCSE subjects are remaining on the old letter grading system for this academic cohort.

Course specific entry requirements:

In addition to general entry requirements for admission to the College, many of our courses have additional subject specific entry requirements; these are available to view in the Toot Hill College prospectus 2017.

2. Which courses are offered at Toot Hill College and what are the differences between them?

We are proud to offer a wide choice of courses at Toot Hill College, which cater to a range of student interests and skill sets.

- **All courses offered at Toot Hill College are ‘Level 3’ qualifications**; this means they have all been graded as the same level of difficulty by Ofqual and, as such, are all valued equally by most universities, apprenticeship and employment schemes.
- In particular, universities allocate different courses ‘UCAS points’ and all of the courses we offer are allocated the same equivalent value (so an A* in an A Level course carries, for example, the same number of UCAS points required for entry to a course as a Distinction* in a vocational course.)

The range of courses we offer can, broadly, be categorised into the following three groups:

1. **A Levels – ‘Facilitating subjects’**
2. **A Levels – All other subjects**
3. **Level 3 Vocational courses (BTEC and Technical Level qualifications)**

1. A Level ‘Facilitating subjects’?

<u>Description:</u>	<u>Courses we offer:</u>
<p><i>These are A Level courses recommended by the ‘Russell Group’ of universities - 24 leading research-intensive universities in Britain, available to view at http://russellgroup.ac.uk/about/our-universities/</i></p> <p><i>The Russell Group will accept A Levels outside of the ‘facilitating subjects’; they have simply stated that they ‘prefer’ these subjects. Please see http://russellgroup.ac.uk/for-students/school-and-college-in-the-uk/subject-choices-at-school-and-college/ for further information.</i></p> <p><i>These A Levels are accepted by all apprenticeship and employment schemes too.</i></p>	<p>Biology</p> <p>Chemistry</p> <p>English Literature</p> <p>Geography</p> <p>History</p> <p>Mathematics</p> <p>Further mathematics</p> <p>French</p> <p>Spanish</p> <p>Physics</p>

2. A Level – ‘All other subjects’?

<u>Description:</u>	<u>Courses we offer:</u>
<p><i>These A Level courses are accepted by all universities, apprenticeship and employment schemes.</i></p> <p><i>The only difference between these A Level courses and A Level ‘Facilitating subjects’ is that the Russell Group of universities have not specifically advised that they recommend them. Nevertheless, many Russell Group courses do accept students studying subjects that are not ‘facilitating subjects’ too – it is just that they have stated they ‘recommend’ or ‘prefer’ them. As such, students who study these other A Levels can still apply to most Russell Group university courses. In addition, all apprenticeship and employment schemes accept them too.</i></p>	<p>Art and Design Computing Drama and Theatre Economics English Language English Comb (Lang&Lit) Fashion and Textiles Government and Politics ICT Law Media Studies Music Philosophy and Ethics Photography PE A Level Product Design Psychology Sociology</p>

3. Vocational courses (BTEC and Technical Level qualifications)?

<u>Description</u>	<u>Courses we offer:</u>
<p><i>These are ‘vocational’ courses, which means they are designed with a specific career path in mind, related to the subject.</i></p> <p><i>They have a higher proportion of the course which is course-work based, although there are also exam units in all of them.</i></p> <p><i>They are all ‘Level 3’ in difficulty, which means Ofqual rates them as the same difficulty as A Levels.</i></p> <p><i>The overwhelming majority of university courses accept these Level 3 vocational qualifications on the courses they offer; in fact, Level 3 vocational courses are given the same equivalent number of UCAS points as A Levels, which shows they rate them equally.</i></p> <p><i>Most apprenticeship and employment schemes accept them too.</i></p>	<p><i>A ‘single award’ is equivalent to one A Level, a ‘double award’ equivalent to two, and a ‘triple award’ equivalent to three.</i></p> <p>Business – Single award Business – Double award</p> <p>ICT BTEC – Single award</p> <p>Sport BTEC – Single award Sport BTEC – Double award</p> <p>Applied Science BTEC – Double award</p> <p>CACHE – Childcare and Education – Triple award</p>

3. How many courses will students select to study in Year 12 at Toot Hill College and why?

Year 12 students beginning study at Toot Hill College from September 2017 onwards will select three courses of study for the duration of their 2 years with us:

Combination 1:	3 A Levels
Combination 2:	2 A Levels and a 'Single award' vocational course
Combination 3:	1 A Level and 1 'Double award' vocational course
Combination 4:	1 A Level and 2 'Single award' vocational courses
Combination 5:	1 'Single award' and 1 'Double award' vocational course
Combination 6:	1 'Triple award' vocational course

Students will select three courses of study, where previously they have selected four, as the result of national changes at Key Stage 5 (students aged 16-18 years) which mean:

1. The old AS Level qualification is now redundant for students intending on completing two full years of study.
2. Universities, apprenticeship schemes and employers universally now only require three Level 3 qualifications (A Levels, vocational courses or a combination).

An overview of national changes made to qualifications at KS5:

- The format and assessment of A Levels nationally has changed:

	<u>Before</u>	<u>After</u>
Format of A Level:	The A Level was 'modular'.	The A Level is now 'linear'.
How the overall A Level result was/is calculated:	The final overall result of the A Level was calculated by taking the average of half the modules, which were assessed at the end of Year 12 (AS Level), and the other half of the modules, which were assessed at the end of Year 13 (A2 Level).	The final overall result of the A Level is calculated by taking the average of all modules, which are all and can only be assessed at the end of Year 13 (A level).
What did/does getting an AS Level mean?	If a student stopped a course in the middle of the two-year A Level, having sat the Year 12 modular assessments, they could receive a separate free-standing 'AS Level' qualification, which was worth the equivalent of half a full A Level.	If a student stops the course in the middle of a two-year course, they can still sit a separate free-standing 'AS Level' assessment. However, these assessments are 'de-coupled' from the full A Level.

		<p>This means that the format of the assessment itself can be quite different from the format of the assessments sat at the end of Year 13.</p> <p>It also means that the overall result in these assessments cannot be counted towards a final A Level result; if the student then chooses to continue the course, they will still have to sit all the assessments that count at the end of Year 13.</p>
<p>What did/do universities, apprenticeship schemes and employment opportunities want?</p>	<p>Key destination providers used to ask for AS Level results as an indicator of what a student would achieve overall at the end of their A Levels.</p>	<p>When the national changes were first introduced, destination providers were initially a little unclear; now all universities, apprenticeship schemes and employment opportunities have stated clearly they only require three Level 3 courses at the end of study – so there is no need to have an additional AS Level qualification and no point students spending time and effort here that could be spent on their three Level 3 courses.</p>

In summary, these national changes have made the old 'AS Level' redundant for students intending on completing two full years of study (which is what we expect students to complete at Toot Hill College). Moreover, there is no longer the need for a fourth 'AS Level' when applying to any university, apprenticeship or employment scheme; all destinations following Toot Hill College now universally only require three Level 3 qualifications.

With this in mind, it is in the student's best interests to concentrate their full time and effort from the start on the three courses they will achieve a final result in at the end of Year 13.

In essence, students will select three courses in Year 12 and study them for the duration of both years, before sitting terminal exams and submitting final coursework assignments at the end.

4. What advice can we give regarding which courses to select?

We advise that three important things to consider when selecting courses at Toot Hill College are:

1. A student's interests – which subjects genuinely engage them?

Please see the Toot Hill College Prospectus for further detailed information about each of the courses. In addition, during the Open Evening there will be the opportunity to visit course specific presentations on each of the courses offered at Toot Hill College. Finally, copies of the presentations given by each of the courses at the Open Evening are available to view on our College Noticeboard page:

- www.toothillschool.co.uk
- Click on 'College noticeboard'
- Select 'Applications to Toot Hill College' tab on the left hand side
- Scroll down until you reach 'Toot Hill College Virtual Open Evening'

2. A student's strengths – what is a student good at?

What are their predicted GCSE results in each of the subjects?

This is a key consideration because in order to study many of the courses we offer, students need to achieve the course specific entry requirements, as well as the general entry requirements.

When you make your application to Toot Hill College you will be asked to submit your predicted GCSE results.

These need to be the most recent predictions you have. If you are applying as a student from Toot Hill Lower School, please enter the most recent report data you have but please also be aware that the 11.2 predictions will be used by the time of the interview.

Are their skills sets weighted more towards exams or coursework-based subjects?

This is a key consideration when selecting the type of Level 3 course students wish to complete during their time with us; A Levels are more heavily exam-based, while vocational courses are more heavily coursework-based.

Are they stronger in literary or numerate subjects? Or are they creative, sporty, linguistic or good with children?

Please see below for a table of subjects that tend to require more specific skill sets:

Literary	Literary and numerate:	Numerate:	Creative:	Other:
Drama and Theatre English Language English Literature English Language and Literature	Economics Geography Psychology Business	<i>*These all have a considerable maths component to the course:</i> Biology* Chemistry* Computing* ICT	Art and Design Fashion and Textiles Photography Product Design	French Spanish PE A Level Sport BTEC

Government and Politics History Law Media Philosophy and Ethics Sociology		Maths* Further Maths* Physics* Applied Science BTEC ICT BTEC		CACHE – Childcare and Education
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3. **A student's aspirations** – what do they want to do after Toot Hill College?

All Year 11 students at Toot Hill will just have completed their work experience, which may have given them an insight into an area they are interested in after Further Education.

In addition, we advise students to research possible future careers using tools such as the National Careers Service website and free contact number to a professional adviser:

Website: <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>

National Careers Service contact number: 0800 100 900

For further advice regarding possible future careers, we advise contacting our School Careers Adviser, Ms. Fiona Farmer: ffarmer@toothillschool.co.uk

Further reading:

Other handy guides for helping you to select the right courses are:

<http://russellgroup.ac.uk/for-students/school-and-college-in-the-uk/subject-choices-at-school-and-college/>

<http://university.which.co.uk/advice/a-level-choices/six-things-you-need-to-know-before-making-your-a-level-choices>

<https://www.oxford-royale.co.uk/articles/how-to-choose-a-levels.html>

<http://www.careerpilot.org.uk/info/a-levels/choosing-your-a-levels-what-you-/#link2>

<http://www.cife.org.uk/article/choosing-the-right-a-level-subjects/>

Further guidance:

You can also view our 'Handy student guide to choosing the right courses at Toot Hill College' by downloading this worksheet from the 'Applications' section of our College Noticeboard.

5. How and when do students make an application to Toot Hill College?

Please see below for a timetable of deadlines for the application cycle to Toot Hill College for a September 2017 start:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event / Deadline</u>
Tuesday 8 th November 2016	Toot Hill College Open Evening
Wednesday 9th November 2016	Applications to Toot Hill College open
Friday 16th December 2016 (Final day of Autumn Term 2016)	Application deadline to Toot Hill College for a guaranteed interview.
Monday 16 th January 2016	Interview cycle begins
Friday 20th January 2016	Final Application deadline to Toot Hill College – application cycle closed at this date.
Friday 31 st March 2016 (Final day of Spring Term 2016)	Interview cycle ends.

Please see below for a summary of steps for applying to Toot Hill College:

<u>Step:</u>	<u>Activity:</u>
1. Research choice of courses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read advice in this handbook for how to select appropriate courses - Speak to parents/your tutor/Ms. Farmer - View Toot Hill College Prospectus - Attend Toot Hill College Open Evening or go online to attend our Toot Hill College 'Virtual Open Evening'.
2. Apply online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete the online application form available on the Toot Hill School website and submit (www.toothillschool.co.uk/apply)
3. Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You will be contacted to arrange an interview time, which will take place in the Spring Term 2017.
4. Outcome of interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If you are successful at interview, you will be offered a provisional place at Toot Hill College beginning in September 2017, provided you achieve the necessary general and subject specific entry requirements.
5. GCSE Results Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If you achieve the necessary general and subject specific entry requirements, your place at Toot Hill College will be confirmed and you will be asked to enrol online for a September 2017 start.

6. Given my GCSE Results profile, what have students tended to study in the past and where have they tended to go after Toot Hill College?

Every student is an individual case and different pathways are appropriate for different students. As such, the information included below is simply a guideline, not in any way a prescriptive pathway, of what students have tended to select in the past.

Below is included information regarding national trends in KS4 to KS5 pathways – that is, given what a student achieved at GCSE, what have they been likely to study and achieve at A Level, and what did they tend to select as their preferred post-Toot Hill College destination.

<u>GCSE Results profile</u> (Approximate!)	<u>A Level profile</u> (Approximate!)	<u>University Destinations/Courses</u>	<u>Apprenticeship Destinations</u>
9+ GCSEs All A-A*s	3 A Levels including 2-3 'Facilitating subjects' All A-A*s.	<u>Universities:</u> Cambridge University Oxford University Imperial College London King's College London University College London London School of Economics and Political Science <u>Courses:</u> Medicine Dentistry Veterinary medicine Veterinary science	<u>Degree-level apprenticeship schemes:</u> Equivalent to degree-level and above. Please see https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/apprenticeships-uk/degree-and-professional-apprenticeships
9+ GCSEs All B – A*	3 A Levels including 1-2 'Facilitating subjects'. All B-A*s. OR Some have studied 2 A Levels and 1 vocational course.	<u>Universities: Russell Group</u> University of Birmingham University of Bristol University of Cambridge Cardiff University Durham University University of Edinburgh University of Exeter University of Glasgow Imperial College London King's College London University of Leeds University of Liverpool London School of Economics and Political Science University of Manchester Newcastle University University of Nottingham University of Oxford Queen Mary University of London Queen's University Belfast University of Sheffield University of Southampton University College London University of Warwick University of York	
7+ GCSEs All C – A*	Mixture of A Levels and	<u>University groups including:</u> <u>1994 University Group:</u> University of Bath Birkbeck, University of London	

	<p>vocational courses. All C-A* or Merit-Distinction.</p>	<p>University of East Anglia University of Essex Goldsmiths, University of London Lancaster University University of Leicester Loughborough University University of Reading Royal Holloway University of London School of Oriental and African Studies University of St Andrews University of Surrey University of Sussex</p>	
<p>7+ GCSEs All D – A*</p>	<p>Mixture of A Levels and vocational courses; many studied a majority of vocational courses.</p> <p>All D-A* or Merit-Distinction.</p>	<p>University Alliance: Bournemouth University University of Bradford Cardiff Metropolitan University Coventry University De Montford University Glasgow Caledonian University University of Hertfordshire University of Huddersfield Kingston University University of Lincoln Liverpool John Moores University Manchester Metropolitan University Northumbria University Nottingham Trent University Oxford Brookes University Plymouth University University of Portsmouth University of Salford Sheffield Hallam University University of South Wales Teesside University University of West England, Bristol</p> <p>CMU Universities Group University of Abertay, Dundee Anglia Ruskin University Bath Spa University University of Bedfordshire Birmingham City University University of Bolton University of Central Lancashire University of Derby University of East London University of Glamorgan University of Gloucestershire University of Greenwich Leeds Metropolitan University London Metropolitan University London South Bank University Middlesex University Napier University University of Northampton Roehampton University Southampton Solent University Staffordshire University University of Sunderland University of Teesside Thames Valley University University of Wales Institute, Cardiff University of the West of Scotland University of Westminster</p>	<p>Higher-Level apprenticeship schemes: Equivalent to a Foundation Degree and above.</p> <p>Please see http://www.careerpilot.org.uk/info/apprenticeships/higher-apprenticeships/</p>