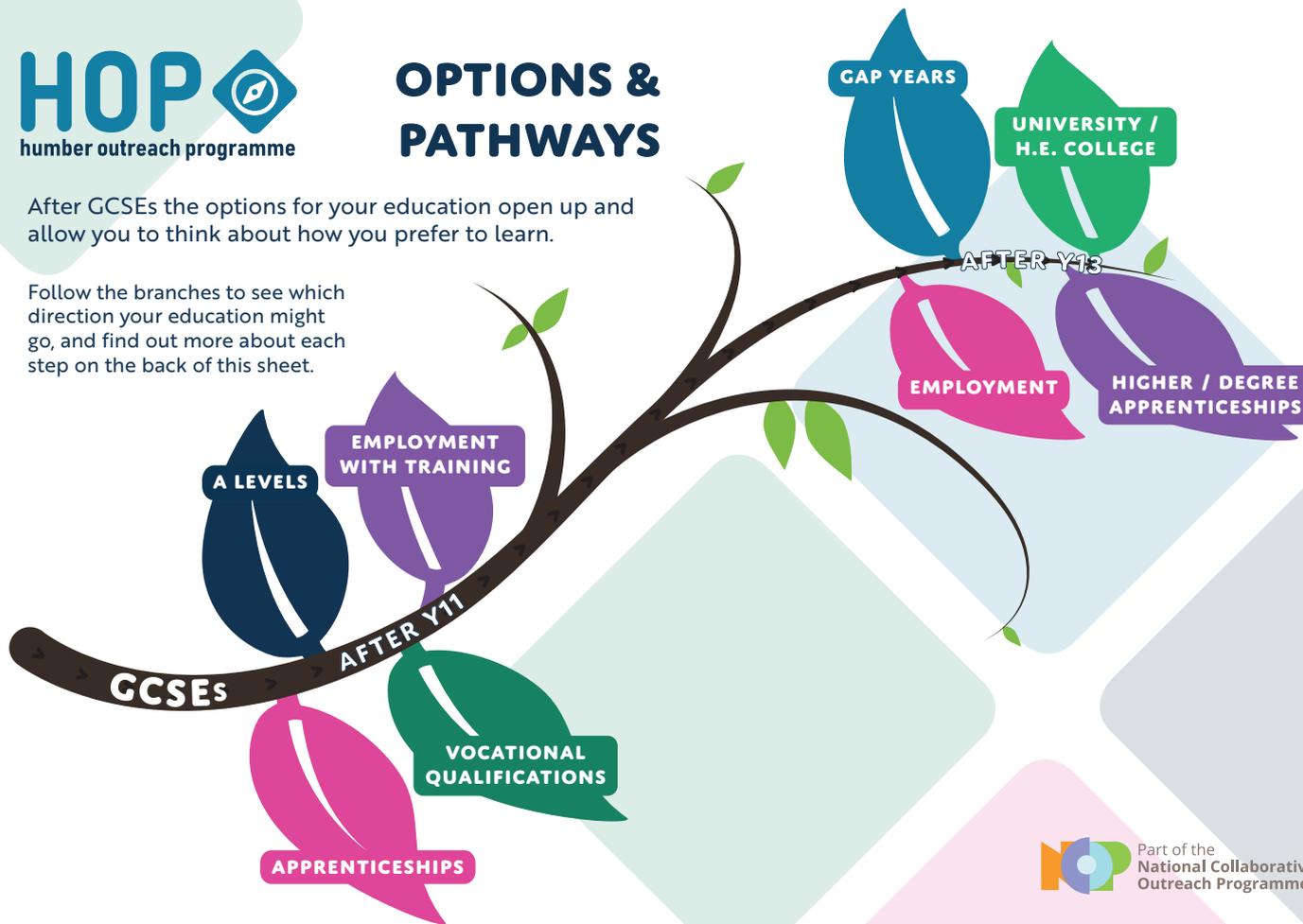


## OPTIONS & PATHWAYS

After GCSEs the options for your education open up and allow you to think about how you prefer to learn.

Follow the branches to see which direction your education might go, and find out more about each step on the back of this sheet.



## AFTER YEAR 11

### A LEVELS

A Levels are more advanced/specialised versions of GCSEs. They are generally studied over two years. Most students choose to take 4 subjects in Y12, and some drop one subject for Y13.

### EMPLOYMENT WITH TRAINING

Vocational Qualifications are specialist work-related qualifications, combining practical learning with subject theory, e.g. electrical engineering, plumbing. These include BTECs and Diplomas, and most can be studied alongside A Levels.

### APPRENTICESHIPS

Apprenticeships allow you to earn a salary and gain qualifications at the same time. They include on-the-job training, give you valuable work experience and can qualify you for career progression. You can get apprenticeships with companies like BP or HM Forces.

### VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

In order to go straight to work at 16, you must also be in part-time education or training. By law, you must spend at least 20 hours per week working/volunteering while studying or training.

## AFTER YEAR 13

### UNIVERSITY / H.E. COLLEGE

At University you can study a specific subject for a number of years and gain a Degree. Many careers will require a Degree-level qualification, so it's a good idea to research any career paths you're interested in. Other options available at Universities and HE Colleges include Foundation Degrees and Higher National Diplomas /Certificates. You can also take 'Access to Higher Education' courses, which prepare people without the necessary qualifications for study at University.

### EMPLOYMENT

At this point you can go straight into Employment in many sectors—retail, catering & events just to name a few. Many employers will ask for certain qualifications or relevant work experience.

### HIGHER / DEGREE APPRENTICESHIPS

Some Apprenticeships run as 'School Leaver Programmes', which are Apprenticeships aimed at students in Year 13. These—and other Apprenticeships—act as a middle ground between full-time employment and Higher Education. As mentioned above, they allow you to earn a salary and gain qualifications & training at the same time, and can lead to further qualifications or even a Degree.

### GAP YEARS

It may be a good idea to take a 'Gap Year'. This can be a year of any activity you need—working, travelling, supporting family, etc. Many students take Gap Years to give themselves more time to make decisions. Remember, you can apply for University and postpone your entry by a year (called 'deferring').