

# Information Pack for Qualifications for Home Educators aged 14-16

Whilst formal qualifications are not compulsory for children who are home educated, the EHE (Elective Home education) team receive a lot of enquiries about qualifications each year. It is important that all parents/carers are aware that there are options for children to gain qualifications without attending school, which can support their child to access college, post-16 training, or apprenticeships. We hope you find this pack useful.

## 1. Understanding Your Options for Qualifications

Home educators have several options when considering exams for their children. Here's a breakdown of key qualifications and pathways. Some may not be suitable for home educated children, but they are included so parents are aware of the full range of options:

### GCSEs:

- Widely recognized academic qualifications in specific subjects.
- Assessed mainly through exams; some subjects include coursework.
- Typically taken over two years (Years 10 and 11) but can be more flexible for home-educated students.
- Can be taken at any age, and students can choose as many or as few subjects as desired. Some GCSEs include coursework, which may require teacher input.

### IGCSEs

- Similar to GCSEs but with less emphasis on coursework, making them suitable for independent learners.
- Focuses on exam-based assessments.
- Can be studied through online courses, correspondence schools, or self-study.

### Functional Skills

- Qualifications in English, Maths, and ICT that focus on practical skills and real-world application.
- Available at Levels 1 and 2 (Level 1 is pre-GCSE, and Level 2 is equivalent to a GCSE Grade 4).
- Assessment is pass/fail based on practical tasks.

### **BTECs and Vocational Qualifications:**

- Focus on skills-based learning in various subjects such as Business, Sport, IT, and Health and Social Care.
- Can be taken at different levels (from Level 1 to Level 3).
- Include practical assessments, projects, and coursework.
- Currently more limited for home educators due to the requirement to have regularly assessed assignments.

### **Open Awards and Other Diplomas:**

- Alternative qualifications focusing on skills and knowledge in a variety of fields.
- Includes qualifications like ASDAN, which develop skills for learning, employment, and personal development.
- Currently more limited for home educators due to the requirement to be at a centre (school/college) where they have the certificate to deliver the courses.

### **T-Levels (Technical Levels):**

- Designed as an alternative to A-Levels, but some subjects are available for 14–16-year-olds.
- These qualifications focus on technical skills with a mix of classroom learning and practical work experience.
- Currently more limited for home educators due to their structured nature.

## **2. Considerations for Choosing Qualifications**

For home-educated students aged 14-16, there are multiple qualification pathways.

When selecting qualifications, you may wish to consider the following:

- **Future Goals:** Understand what qualifications are required for further education or career paths.
- **Learning Style:** Choose qualifications that match the student's preferred learning style (exam-heavy, coursework, or practical).
- **Assessment Requirements:** Be aware of the format of assessments—whether exams, coursework, or practical tasks.
- **Access to Resources:** Ensure you have access to necessary learning materials, exam centres, and any required support (e.g., tutors).
- **Costs:** Account for the costs of courses, exam fees, materials, and any additional support required.
- **Flexibility:** Some qualifications like IGCSEs and Functional Skills offer flexibility in timing and location of exams, which can be advantageous for home educators.

### 3. How to Get Started

#### Step 1: Research and Choose Qualifications

Review the qualifications available and consider which best fit your child's needs and future plans. Use the links provided in this guide and from your own research for specific courses and further information.

#### Step 2: Plan the Study Approach

Decide whether to enrol in an online school or college, use correspondence courses, or follow a self-study plan. Consider the level of support your child will need.

#### Step 3: Register for Courses and Exams

For GCSEs and IGCSEs, register with a course provider or purchase study packs, if self-studying.

Ensure registration deadlines are met for exams. This will need to be checked with the exam board and the centre you choose to sit the exam at.

#### Step 4: Find an Exam Centre

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to locate an exam centre where the child can sit as a private candidate. Centres can be found in local schools, colleges, or dedicated private exam centres.

#### Step 5: Prepare for Exams

Utilize textbooks, online resources, past papers, and revision guides. Plan a study schedule that allows adequate time for each subject.

Advice regarding this can be found at: [How do I make a revision timetable for my exams? - BBC Bitesize](#)

#### Step 6: Monitor Progress and Make Adjustments

Regularly review progress and adjust the study plan as needed. Seek additional help if certain subjects prove challenging.

### 4. Useful Contacts and Resources:

**Connexions Wolverhampton:** Provides careers advice and support for young people.

Contact: Joanna Jones - Tel: 07971 719329 | Email:

Joanna.Jones@wolverhampton.gov.uk

## 5. Information about each Route to Study:

### GCSEs:

GCSEs are delivered by exam boards. These write a syllabus for each exam subject and set and mark the exams. The main ones are:

AQA: [AQA | Qualifications](#)

OCR: [GCSE qualifications - OCR](#)

Pearson Edexcel: [Edexcel GCSEs | Pearson qualifications](#)

WJEC: [GCSE & A Level Qualifications | WJEC](#)

It would be worth checking which exam centre offers which subject, and if there are any limitations regarding which exam board.

Once decided, it would be useful to download the syllabus (which states what needs to be learned), and there is also access to past exam papers and mark schemes. These are useful to know how the questions will be written and what level of detail the examiners will be looking for. Some exam boards may also provide teaching resources and extra documents which may help.

Finding an exam centre is critical. It is important to register as soon as possible, and at least 6 months before the exam date. Exam fees also increase the closer to the exam date.

Below is a list of exam centres in Wolverhampton and nearby areas that we believe to currently accept private candidates:

#### Exam Centres in Wolverhampton

##### 1. Wolverhampton Grammar School

- **Address:** Compton Rd, Wolverhampton WV3 9RB
- **Contact:** 01902 421326
- **Website:** [Wolverhampton Grammar School](#)
- **Notes:** Offers a range of GCSE and IGCSE subjects for private candidates.

##### 2. City of Wolverhampton College

- **Address:** Paget Rd, Wolverhampton WV6 0DU
- **Contact:** 01902 836000
- **Website:** [City of Wolverhampton College](#)
- **Notes:** May offer Functional Skills and some GCSE exams. Contact the college for specific arrangements for private candidates.

#### Exam Centres Near Wolverhampton

##### 1. Tutors and Exams - Coventry

- **Address:** Coventry Building Society Arena, Judds Lane, Longford, Coventry, CV6 6AQ
- **Contact:** 024 7622 4224
- **Website:** [Tutors and Exams Coventry](#)

- **Notes:** Specializes in providing exam facilities for private candidates, offering a wide range of GCSE, IGCSE, A-Levels, and Functional Skills exams.
- 2. **Exam House - Birmingham**
  - **Address:** 207 Fort Parkway, Birmingham, B24 9FD
  - **Contact:** 0121 794 2054
  - **Website:** [Exam House Birmingham](#)
  - **Notes:** Offers a variety of exam services for private candidates including GCSEs, IGCSEs, and Functional Skills.
- 3. **MPW Birmingham (Mander Portman Woodward)**
  - **Address:** 17-18 Greenfield Crescent, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 3AU
  - **Contact:** 0121 454 9637
  - **Website:** MPW Birmingham
  - **Notes:** Provides a range of GCSE and IGCSE exam options for private candidates.
- 4. **Edgbaston Exam Centre**
  - **Address:** 37 George Rd, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 1PL
  - **Contact:** 0121 455 8274
  - **Website:** [Edgbaston Exam Centre](#)
  - **Notes:** Offers examination services to private candidates for a variety of qualifications including GCSEs, IGCSEs, and Functional Skills.
- 5. **King Edward's School, Birmingham**
  - **Address:** Edgbaston Park Rd, Birmingham B15 2UA
  - **Contact:** 0121 472 1672
  - **Website:** [King Edward's School](#)
  - **Notes:** Limited availability; contact directly to inquire about specific subjects and availability for private candidates.

**When choosing an Exam Centre you may wish to consider:**

- **Availability of Subjects:** Not all centres offer every subject, so confirm the availability of your chosen exams.
- **Deadlines and Fees:** Ensure you understand the registration deadlines and fee structure, as these can vary between centres.
- **Accessibility:** Consider the location and transport options to the exam centre, especially for exams taken over multiple days.

For the most accurate and current information, it's recommended to contact the centres directly or visit their websites to confirm their offerings for private candidates.

The exam centre will let you know how you get access to the results. Some will allow you to collect them in person, others will email them, some may have a log on facility. The results are the student's results and parents/carers will only be able to collect with written permissions from the student.

## **iGCSEs:**

### **Online Education/Correspondence Courses:**

Options like King's InterHigh, Briteschool, Cambridge Home School, and Oxford Home Schooling offer full curricula leading to iGCSEs or GCSEs. These courses are flexible, but the responsibility to find and pay for exam centres falls to parents.

### **Examples of Providers:**

- [King's InterHigh](#)
- [Briteschool](#)
- [Cambridge Home School](#)
- [Oxford Home Schooling](#)

## **Functional Skills:**

Functional Skills are a practical alternative to GCSEs, focusing on applying English, Maths, and ICT skills in real-life scenarios. These can be taken flexibly, but some exam boards have set assessment windows.

### **Useful Links for Functional Skills Courses:**

- [Skills for Life Network](#)
- [Pass Functional Skills](#)
- [Oxbridge Home Learning](#)

## 14-16 College Provision:

There are some local colleges that allow children who are home educated to enrol on a part-time course. The college will ask for confirmation that the student is home educated from the EHE team. For the team to confirm that your child is home educated, learning needs to be deemed suitable and an up-to-date learning plan needs to be in place.

Due to the college placement being 2 - 2.5 days a week. There is still a requirement for a plan of learning to be in place for the remaining days. The EHE team are aware that the college will be covering the academic side of her education so the remaining time can include aspects such as study time, and life skills for example.

Courses often combine vocational skills with GCSEs or Functional Skills, with exam costs covered by the college. Options are listed below. For more details, please contact the provided links or contact the relevant colleges directly.

- **Walsall College:** Offers Functional Skills and employability courses. Contact: Adam Comery - Tel: 01922 688503 | Email: [acomery@walsallcollege.ac.uk](mailto:acomery@walsallcollege.ac.uk)
- **South Staffordshire College:** Provides vocational courses with GCSE English and Maths. Contact: Karen Burley - Tel: 01543 396583 | Email: [Karen.Burley@southstaffs.ac.uk](mailto:Karen.Burley@southstaffs.ac.uk)
- **Halesowen College:** Offers GCSEs in core subjects and vocational options like Animal Care and IT. Contact: Joanne Smith - Tel: 0121 602 7727 | Email: [joannesmith@halesowen.ac.uk](mailto:joannesmith@halesowen.ac.uk)
- **Telford College:** Includes GCSEs or Functional Skills in English and Maths. Contact: Hannah Smith - Tel: 01952 642482 | Email: [Hannah.smith@tcat.ac.uk](mailto:Hannah.smith@tcat.ac.uk)

It would be advised that applications for college placements are made early. They can fill up quickly.

## Return to School or Flexi-Schooling:

For students nearing 14 years old, returning to school or flexi-schooling (part-time attendance) might be options. Flexi-schooling arrangements must be agreed upon with the school.

A return to school would require an in year application form, which can be found at: [School admissions | City Of Wolverhampton Council](#)