



Raising the Participation Age (RPA)

Important information for students in Year 11 and their parents

Raising the Participation Age (RPA) is coming into effect from summer 2013. This affects young people **currently in Year 11 and below**.

What is RPA?

The government has increased the age at which young people are required to participate in education or training. Current Year 11 students will have to continue with some form of learning until the end of the school year in which they turn 17.

It does not mean you have to stay on at school after Year 11. It is not raising the school leaving age.

Young people can choose one of the following at 16:

Remain in full time education, such as school or college

- Become employed as an apprentice
- Be employed, self-employed, volunteering or in an internship, for at least 20 hours a week, and attend part-time learning for the equivalent of one day per week.

Why is this happening?

Most young people already continue in learning after the age of 16. This is because it gives them the best chance to gain the skills and qualifications they'll need to help achieve whatever they want to go on to do - whether that's a job or further study. Opportunities for unskilled work are shrinking rapidly; further learning will significantly increase prospects for future employment and the amount people are likely to earn over their lifetime.

Can young people still leave school at 16 and get a job?

Yes; earning (with some learning) might be the right choice. If leaving school for work that is not part of an apprenticeship scheme, your employer would have to provide you with either:

- On the job training towards getting an accredited qualification, for at least the equivalent of one day per week
- Allow you to enrol on accredited learning, off the job, for the equivalent of one day per week (this may take place after work hours).

(Information taken from RBWM website)