

A-Level results – advice on your next steps

The A and AS-Level results are out and guidance and advice is available to you on your next steps. Even if you didn't get the grades you were expecting, all is not lost. While it may appear that a door has been closed, other doors are now open.

What next?

The most important thing at this stage is to stay calm and take the time to consider the options available to you.

It's important that you choose the route best suited to your abilities, while taking into consideration future economic and labour market trends.

Contact a careers adviser

Professionally-qualified careers advisers can give you impartial information, advice and guidance on the options available to you.

To contact a careers adviser, you can:

Careers advisers will be available from 9.00 am to 7.00 pm to provide support to A-Level students on Thursday 16 and Friday 17 August.

Online help

To help you explore your options, there is lots of useful information available online about:

- accepting an offer from a university or college
- clearing
- re-sits and re-marks
- appeals
- gap years

You can find out more by going to the page below:

Further information on the many options available to you are also available in the following section:

Querying your results

If you have a query on any issue relating to your exam results (for example appeals, re-marks or re-sits) then contact your school, college or the [Council for Curriculum Examinations and Assessment \(CCEA\)](#) helpline:

The helpline will be open 9.00 am to 5.00 pm until Wednesday 29 August.

Contacting universities and colleges

You also can find contact details for universities and colleges in Northern Ireland below:

More useful links

[Advice for students and their parents at exam results time](#)

For thousands of students the waiting is nearly over. This year, AS/A Levels results will be published on Thursday 17 August and GCSE results on Thursday 24 August. Once you get your results you may have important decisions to make, and you can get guidance and advice from the Careers Service.

Contacting a careers adviser

Whether or not you get the grades you are expecting, it's important to make an informed choice once you have your results.

The [Careers Service](#) has a team of professionally-qualified careers advisers who offer impartial careers information, advice and guidance to people of all ages.

To contact a careers adviser you can:

Careers Service advisers will be available from 9.00 am to 7.30 pm to provide support to students and their parents on:

- Thursday 17 and Friday 18 August for A-Level students
- Thursday 24 and Friday 25 August for GCSE students

Online information

To help you explore your options, there is also lots of useful information available on nidirect, including articles on:

To find out more, please go to the following page:

More useful links

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Hepatitis B protection now part of routine baby vaccine

All babies born on or after 1 August 2017 are now being offered protection against hepatitis B as part of the universal childhood immunisation programme. This Hexavalent vaccine replaces the existing 5-in-1 vaccine that children routinely get.

Routine immunisation schedule

There has been no change to the immunisation schedule or to the number of injections – children will continue to be immunised at the ages of 8, 12 and 16 weeks.

The only change is to the components of the vaccine itself, which now provides extra protection for hepatitis B, as well as protecting against:

- diphtheria
- tetanus
- whooping cough (pertussis)
- polio
- haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)

It is already widely used with around 150 million doses having been given in 97 countries in Europe and across the world.

You can find out more about the vaccine at these links:

As adults are the majority of infected people, vaccinating children will help protect them in childhood from potential exposure to infected household or family members.

Vaccinating infants will essentially reduce the risk of infection and will provide longer term protection against future exposure risks.

Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B is spread by contact with the blood or bodily fluids of an infected person. It can cause liver cirrhosis and cancer.

[Hepatitis B](#) can be passed on:

- through having unprotected sex
- from mother to baby
- from contact with infected blood in areas of the world where hepatitis B is more common

You cannot get hepatitis B by shaking hands, coughing, sneezing, sharing food, or by using the same toilet.

People with hepatitis B infection may not be aware that they are infected as chronic infection mostly has no symptoms.

If you think you may have been exposed to the virus, even if this was many years ago, talk to [your GP](#) or nurse and get tested.

More useful links

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Health benefits of breastfeeding babies

Breastfeeding has many important health benefits for both mother and baby. Any period of breastfeeding, however short, will benefit your baby. People are being asked to show support for mums who breastfeed in public.

Benefits of breastfeeding

From the moment a mother starts to breastfeed, both baby and mum will begin to feel the benefits to their health and well-being.

Antibodies in breast milk help protect babies from infection and other illnesses including:

- stomach infections, vomiting and diarrhoea
- ear and chest infections
- kidney infections
- asthma
- eczema
- sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
- childhood diabetes
- childhood obesity

Mums who breastfeed are at a statistically lower risk of developing:

- breast cancer
- ovarian cancer
- osteoporosis (bone thinning)
- type 2 diabetes

You can find out more on the [breastfeeding](#) page.

Breastfeeding in public

For many mums, getting started isn't easy and that's why support is crucial.

This includes making mums feel more comfortable about feeding in public, as this is something that many mums are apprehensive about.

A mum breastfeeding is normal, no matter where it happens, and is not something a mum needs to say sorry for.

The ['Breastfeeding Welcome Here'](#) scheme aims to help mums feel more comfortable about feeding their baby in public.

There are now more than 700 businesses, council facilities, and popular local attractions signed up to the scheme. They display a sticker and certificate in their premises to let mums know that they are welcome to feed in all areas and will not be asked to stop breastfeeding.

Staff are also made aware that they are to be supportive of mothers on the premises.

You can find a list and map of 'Breastfeeding Welcome Here' places, along with other advice about breastfeeding, on the [Breastfed Babies website](#).

More useful links

[Apply for school uniform grant](#)

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The new term might not start for a few more weeks, but parents may already be thinking about getting their children ready for school. Grants are available to help with buying school uniforms for certain pupils. Find out if you're eligible for a grant.

Clothing allowance

The Clothing Allowance Scheme covers pupils in primary, post-primary and special schools. It does not apply to pupils at nursery schools, nursery units or reception classes.

The eligibility criteria are similar to those used for free school meals and seeks to support families who are on benefits or on low incomes. To find out more about the grant and to see if you can apply, see the page below:

The [Education Authority](#) is responsible for the administration of the scheme.

More useful links

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