



South Kent College  
ASHFORD > DOVER > FOLKESTONE

# SKC and your Teenager

Education, Care, Guidance and Support





By Year 10 or 11, it's time for teenagers to take important decisions about their next steps in education that will ultimately lead to employment. Parents wish to give good advice and guidance at this time but often find they have many unanswered questions of their own.

These may include:

- >> How will I know my teenager is making sensible choices?
- >> Who will help my teenager to make the right decisions?
- >> How can I ensure that my teenager chooses the right educational pathway?
- >> How do I find out more about vocational qualifications?
  
- >> If my teenager leaves school after Year 11, what support can they expect (financial, pastoral and educational) at college?

South Kent College hopes that this guide will help you and your teenager feel more informed but don't hesitate to contact the College for any further information you may need.

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*92% of SKC students would recommend their course to another person\**

*\*End of year 2008/09 survey conducted with our students*

# Education at South Kent College (SKC)

Please see our **SKceno** guide for the courses available to 16-18 year-olds at South Kent College

## What courses can my teenager choose at college?

This depends on your teenager's abilities, interests, age, personality and goals. Colleges are usually places where teenagers can choose from the broadest range of further education courses, all of which can lead to higher education (also available at SKC) or employment. It's all about choosing the right course at the right level.

## What are the qualifications available?

South Kent College offers a wide range of Level 1 to 3 qualifications for 16-18 year-olds. These include a choice of vocational qualifications such as NVQs, BTECs and Apprenticeships.

SKC also offers the new Diplomas. Diplomas are national qualifications, based around employment sectors, designed by schools, colleges and employers. They enable students to combine academic learning with invaluable hands-on experience and each is offered at different levels. The full range of Diplomas will be available by 2013 by which time they will cover 14 different employment categories.

## My teenager did well at GCSEs\*. Are A-Levels the only option?

A-Levels are just one of the Level 3 options available. Equivalent qualifications such as the new Advanced Diplomas, a BTEC National or an NVQ 3 may sometimes be a better choice for teenagers keen to have a hands-on approach to learning. These courses will also keep their higher education options open.

*\*Qualifications taken at the end of Year 11 may also include BTEC First, NVQ 1, and other Level 1 or 2 courses.*

## My teenager did not do well at GCSEs. What are the options?

All is not lost. Your teenager can carry on with his/her studies. It will just mean that he/she will start at a lower level on arrival at college. Your teenager will progress at his/her own pace gaining qualifications to help them reach their goal.

## Can my teenager apply to university after attending a further education college?

Definitely. After gaining an appropriate Level 3 qualification, young people can apply to university courses via UCAS or carry on at college. As an associate College of the University of Kent and Canterbury Christ Church University, South Kent College offers a wide choice of higher education qualifications and degrees, many of which are accredited by these universities.

Choosing to study a higher education course at your local college means that you may be paying less than the tuition fees charged by universities.



# SKC Feedback for Parents/Carers

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School leavers starting college discover a new environment with more freedom and more responsibilities. There are many ways that parents/carers can obtain more information and re-assurance both before and during their teenager's studies.

## **Open Days, Parents'/Carers' Evenings and Reports**

Parents/carers are welcome to attend Open Days with their teenagers and get more information. While students are studying at South Kent College, parents/carers will be invited to two Parents' Evenings: one in November, one in March. They will receive a letter asking them to make appointments with the lecturers they wish to meet. Parents/carers will receive a student report by post twice a year. These reports will be shown to and discussed with the student before being sent to parents/carers.

Please visit our website [www.southkent.ac.uk](http://www.southkent.ac.uk) to find out when our Open Days are.

## **How will attendance and punctuality be monitored?**

Students' attendance and punctuality are monitored every day and our lecturers keep a register for each class. In case of sickness, students or parents/carers are expected to phone the College. Attendance is of great importance and the College will telephone students, parents/carers in cases of absence or persistent lateness.

## **What about bullying and other behavioural issues?**

Bullying, behaviour and discipline issues are taken very seriously at South Kent College. As an equal opportunity institution, we do not tolerate bullying and make this clear to all students who join us. We will act promptly on any inappropriate behaviour observed by staff and on any report we receive. South Kent College has a team of Pastoral Tutors which will help students with behavioural issues during and outside classes.

There is a discipline procedure in place at South Kent College. In extreme cases (bullying for instance) students may be excluded.

*98% of students think that their work has been assessed fairly\**

*\*End of year 2008/09 survey conducted with our students*

# Student Support

## Equal opportunities for all

SKC is committed to establishing and maintaining an environment which actively promotes equality of opportunity in all aspects of education, training and employment. We aim to ensure that every student, regardless of background, race, marital status, gender, disability, religion, culture, age and sexual orientation is treated fairly and equally.



## What does South Kent College do to help my teenager settle in at College?

- >> South Kent College initially assesses all students to help identify their learning needs and appropriate starting levels to ensure that they stand the best chance of achieving their ultimate goal.
- >> South Kent College offers an induction to all new students; they will meet their Pastoral Tutor and be made aware of the College policies and procedures i.e. sickness, and be encouraged to take part in student activities and the Students' Union.
- >> Students will receive a Personal Development Folder containing tutorial information, course details and the College diary containing key dates and target-setting pages.
- >> Team-building activities will take place during induction to help students settle within their group of peers.



## How will my teenager be supported during his/her studies?

Each student has a Pastoral Tutor, who they meet with each week. Students have group tutorials, when they will cover different tasks and themes e.g. charity work, social issues, time management and study techniques to help them broaden their mind and improve their social skills. The Pastoral Tutor will also have one-to-one reviews with students to check that they are settling in at College, that they are progressing through their programme and that they are getting all the help they need.

## What if my teenager faces personal difficulties whilst at College?

South Kent College offers free and confidential counselling services to any young person facing difficulties in life, whether related to health, family, relationships or other worries (eating disorders, anger management, depression, sexuality issues).

A College Nurse is available to help students with health and sexual health-related issues.

## Will there be any help for teenagers with a learning difficulty or disability?

South Kent College has an Additional Learning Support (ALS) service, available to students with any kind of learning difficulty or disability: Physical disabilities; hearing or visual impairments; specific or more general learning difficulties; Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD); enduring mental health problems; emotional and behavioural difficulties; long-term health-related problems or Dyslexia/Dyspraxia. Specialist staff will meet with your teenager to discuss and assess his/her particular support needs.

*95% of SKC students think they have received good support from their pastoral tutor\**

*\*End of year 2008/09 survey conducted with our students*

# Employment Opportunities



## Will there be someone to help teenagers with educational and career guidance?

Our Matrix-accredited Educational and Careers Guidance Advisers can give teenagers impartial and free advice regarding courses or careers both before they enrol and also whilst they study at College.



## Will my teenager gain work experience while at College?

This depends on the course chosen. Several qualifications involve work experience. Almost all vocational courses will introduce the student to the related industry.

## Will my teenager receive advice about the specific skills needed for the job he/she wants to do?

Our lecturers are mostly people with great experience and connections in industry, enabling them to give students the best up-to-date advice.

# Finances

## How much do the courses cost?

All full-time courses are free as long as your teenager is under 19 on the 31st of August in the year the course commences.

## Is there someone to help my teenager with the financial matters and forms?

South Kent College Welfare Advisers provide impartial and confidential advice on financial matters such as funding for higher education, alternative financial assistance, filling in forms, money and debt management.



## Can my teenager get some financial help with travel/material/additional costs?

### Yes.

- >> Depending on the family's income, students may be given an Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA). The EMA is a weekly payment of £10, £20 or £30 to help students with day-to-day expenses such as travel, books and equipment.
- >> The Educational Grants Advisory Service (EGAS) offers comprehensive guidance and advice on sources of funding available for post-16 education and training, including loans, grants, benefits, access funds, hardship funds, bursaries and charitable trusts. Services are provided free to individual students.

For further advice and information, students can contact a Welfare Adviser at South Kent College on 0845 207 8220.

*95% of students feel the College treats them with respect\**

*\*End of year 2008/09 survey conducted with our students*

# Student Life at South Kent College

*9/10 students would recommend South Kent College to another person\**

*\*End of year 2008/09 survey conducted with our students*

<b>Learning Centre</b>	<p>A Learning Centre is open to students on each campus in Ashford, Dover or Folkestone. Students can access a wide choice of books, professional magazines, audio-video material and daily newspapers.</p> <p>There is free access to computers, which enables students to study online, work with several software packages including Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, Publisher, FrontPage, etc., do research on the internet, or log onto the student SKC intranet.</p> <p>Students are given their own email account when they start at College.</p>
<b>Students' Union</b>	<p>The College has a Students' Union, which is run by a group of nominated students with various roles. These students are responsible for organising events for students to participate in, finding out about what students want and bringing up any current issues that students have. Students can also join the National Union of Students (NUS), whose membership entitles discounts in many stores (HMV, Pizza Hut, Topshop, Topman, etc.), on travel cards and at entertainment venues on the presentation of the NUS card.</p>
<b>Refectory</b>	<p>Each campus has its own cafeteria and shop with student-friendly prices and a range of foods to suit all diets. Students can choose from a range of healthy foods (salads, fruits...) and enjoy their lunch on a bench outside or in the refectory.</p>
<b>Unique Hair and Beauty Therapy Salons</b>	<p>Hair and Beauty Therapy students work under the supervision of highly qualified teaching staff in order to offer a large choice of treatments to students, staff and the public at very attractive prices.</p>
<b>Art Exhibitions</b>	<p>Exhibitions of student art work are organised throughout the year by the Ashford School of Art &amp; Design (ASAD), part of South Kent College.</p>
<b>Sports</b>	<p>At South Kent College, students have the opportunity to play in the Kent Colleges Student Association Leagues for football, basket-ball, netball, hockey and rugby.</p>
<b>Social Activities</b>	<p>South Kent College activities organisers offer information on trips, events, parties and gigs.</p>
<b>How to get there</b>	<p>All our campuses are easily accessed, by train, bus and road.</p> <p>There is free parking for students.</p>

# Your Role

Even though teenagers yearn for independence, your role as a parent/carer is still very important. You can help by supporting them and opening their mind to the adult world they will soon enter.

## What can I do to help my teenager?

- *Discuss with your teenager what his/her interests and goals are.*  
What subjects are they good at that they enjoy?
- *Would your teenager like to do/learn something new?* There is such a wide range of courses available now that young people can easily develop their knowledge and skills.
- *What kind of individual is your teenager?* An outdoor/indoor person?  
A team player, an individual worker or a mixture of both? A pro-active person?
- *Does your teenager already have a career in mind?* Be aware that there are often several paths that can lead to the same career; this enables your teenager to choose the course best suited for him/her (apprenticeship, academic studies, mixture of vocational and academic, etc.).
- *Help your teenager to be realistic* - not everyone can be a professional footballer or a successful soap actress - but their favourite hobby can provide a solid base from which to explore career options.



## I don't understand all the qualifications.

South Kent College provides a free booklet "What to do after Year 11" explaining levels and qualifications. Request your copy on 0845 207 8220 or go to [www.southkent.ac.uk/contactus/requestcourseguide.asp](http://www.southkent.ac.uk/contactus/requestcourseguide.asp). You can also find out more at our Open Days or by contacting us at any time.

## What is the best educational route for my teenager?

There is a lot of choice for today's student both in further and also higher education so your teenager should find a course suited to their tastes and abilities that will help them reach their full potential. If you are in doubt, South Kent College offers the services of Matrix-accredited Educational and Career Guidance Advisers. They give impartial and free advice regarding the choice of courses for teenagers. This service is available throughout the year.

*97% of students feel they have learnt the teaching and learning methods that are used on their course\**

*\*End of year 2008/09 survey conducted with our students*



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**Phone 0845 207 8220**

Visit [www.southkent.ac.uk](http://www.southkent.ac.uk)

Email [courseinformation@southkent.ac.uk](mailto:courseinformation@southkent.ac.uk)

Call into our receptions on our campuses in Dover, Folkestone and Ashford.

We are open all the year round:

Monday to Thursday 08.30am - 5.00pm, Friday 08.30am - 4.30pm

**Ashford**

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**Folkestone**

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