

NC

SCHOOL LEAVERS MINI GUIDE TO COURSES AND APPRENTICESHIPS

2026/27

A VERY WARM WELCOME FROM THE PRINCIPAL & CEO

I am delighted you are considering Northampton College.

Our focus is on helping you build resilience, become work-ready and prepare for careers, not just courses. We'll support your ambition to go as far as you can, encouraging you to aim high and make the most of every opportunity.

This guide provides an overview of the exciting courses and opportunities available to help you take the next step in your educational journey. Inside, you'll find a snapshot of what we offer. There is much more to discover online, including detailed course descriptions, entry requirements, and application information.

Northampton College is for you if you are:

- Leaving school and seeking further study or an Apprenticeship.
- Pursuing professional and technical qualifications like BTECs and T Levels
- Interested in studying A Levels in a college environment
- Searching for the next course to support your progression.

We welcome students of all abilities and are dedicated to finding the best study programme for you.

With a wide range of courses at different levels, we can help you find the right path, no matter where you're starting from.

Our college is one of the best in the country for 16 to 18 education and our apprentices achieve much better than the national average. We provide a supportive and nurturing environment and we are proud of our "culture of excellence" (Ofsted 2024)

The next step is to gather all the information you can to make an informed decision about your future. We're here to help every step of the way and answer any questions you may have.

I look forward to welcoming you to our college soon.


Jason Lancaster
Principal & CEO



To find out more call

0300 123 2344


or speak to an advisor using the online chat feature on our website.



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96%
OF STUDENTS PASSED THEIR QUALIFICATIONS


94%
OF STUDENTS PROGRESS TO FURTHER STUDY OR EMPLOYMENT

TEN REASONS TO JOIN NORTHAMPTON COLLEGE

- 01 Success** – We get the results: 96% of our students pass their qualifications and 94% went on to further study or employment.
- 02 Innovative courses** – Our qualifications are designed to give you the best start in your chosen career.
- 03 High quality teaching** – Our highly qualified teaching staff have lots of industry experience, so you can learn the skills employers need.
- 04 Improve your grades** – Maths and English are essential for your future. If you want or need to retake these must-have qualifications, our teachers will work with you to improve your skills.
- 05 Top class facilities** – We have the latest technology, well-equipped learning resources and award-winning Digital and Academic Resources Centres across three campuses – Booth Lane, Lower Mounts and Daventry.



WE ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT PERSONAL ENDEAVOUR AND COMMITMENT SO THAT YOU CAN GET THE MOST FROM YOUR TIME WITH US.

- 06 Support is always on hand** – Our Student Services team and the School of Academic and Vocational Support (SAVS) are here to help you with any issues - academic, personal, financial or SEND.
- 07 Enjoy enrichment** – You will love our enrichment programme designed to support you in accessing a range of additional activities outside of the classroom.
- 08 Be work ready** – We have excellent links with local businesses and connect with them to ensure you get valuable work placements.
- 09 Help with your future plans** – Our Futures team is here to support students with plans for their future, whether you want help with study options, progression routes or career choices.
- 10 Safe and welcoming** – Your personal development, behaviour and welfare is our priority and we welcome students whatever your needs, background or experience.



FIND A COURSE THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU!

THERE ARE LOTS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF QUALIFICATIONS AVAILABLE FOR SCHOOL LEAVERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE BETWEEN 16 AND 18 YEARS OLD.

Once you've found a subject that interests you and aligns with your career goals, you can choose the qualification and level that's right for you.

ENTRY 3 PROGRAMMES

If you are unsure what you want to do or need to improve your qualification our one year full-time vocational Entry 3 programme provides an ideal starting point. You will gain a vocational qualification alongside developing your maths and English and digital skills with a strong focus on personal development.

LEVEL 1 QUALIFICATIONS

These introductory qualifications will provide the perfect progression route to BTEC or equivalent qualifications at Level 2 and above.

LEVEL 2 AND 3 STUDY PROGRAMMES

These highly regarded qualifications include BTECs and will help you prepare for your next step, whether it is employment or further and higher education.

A LEVELS

A Levels are two-year qualifications offered across a range of academic subjects usually assessed by exams. They are a well-established route to higher education and a range of jobs.

T LEVELS

Combining classroom learning with industry placements, T Levels offer a practical and focused pathway into various technical careers.

PRE-APPRENTICESHIPS

Our 12-week pre-apprenticeship programme is a fantastic opportunity to build your skills, gain valuable workplace experience, and get you ready to begin your full apprenticeship.

APPRENTICESHIPS (LEVELS 2-5)

Gain qualifications while you learn

These personalised development programmes offer a work-based route to a skills occupation with on-the-job training. These include Intermediate, Advanced and Higher Apprenticeships.



EMILY'S STORY

Emily is thriving as an entrepreneur, following her journey of mastering the trade while earning her Level 3 Business course at the College.



Her passion for business led her to develop key skills that are now the foundation of her own venture, Cora Social Media Agency.

Emily is thankful to the College for showing her how to start a career in the business industry, noting that the education she received there surpassed what she got when studying architecture at the University of Brighton.

She said: "I wanted a diploma instead of A Levels, and the College truly understood what I needed.

"They treated me like an adult, offering a level of respect and independence that was so different from school."

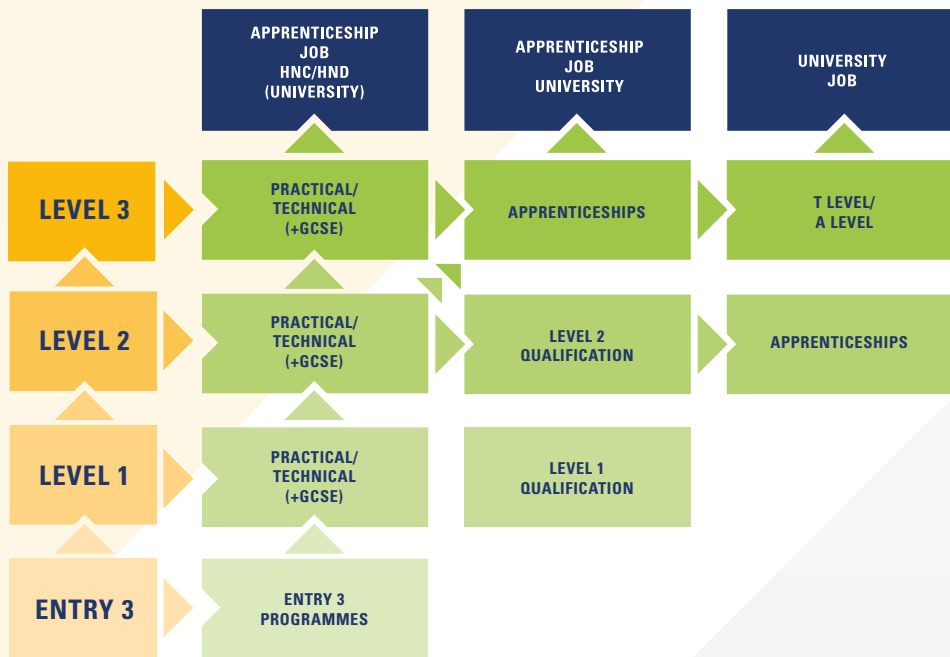
She added: "The facilities were outstanding, and the support team went above and beyond, always there when I needed help.

"I've never received such fantastic support and resources anywhere else, and I would absolutely recommend the College to anyone looking for a more tailored, adult approach to their education."

Emily has returned to the College to speak to students, reflecting on her time there and the accomplishments she has achieved since.

PROGRESSION ROUTES

Studying at Northampton College provides great opportunities to progress through the levels of qualifications into University Level, Apprenticeships and employment.



LEVELS

Your GCSE results will decide the right level for you.
*For more information on individual courses and entry requirements, visit our website.

ENTRY CRITERIA GUIDE

ENTRY 3 PROGRAMMES

GCSEs – mainly 2-1 grades. Satisfactory school reference.

LEVEL 1

Four GCSEs at grade 2 or above.

LEVEL 2

Four GCSEs at grade 3 or above.

LEVEL 3

BTEC or equivalent: Four GCSEs at grade 9-4.

T Levels: Five GCSEs at grade 9-4 - English and maths GCSEs must both be at grade 5 or above.

A Levels: Five GCSEs at grade 5 or above including:

English Language and maths, with a grade 6 in another written subject desirable.

Access to HE courses have individual entry requirements.

LEVEL 4/5

A Level 3 qualification such as: A Levels, BTEC Level 3, Access to HE, Advanced Apprenticeship.

- Some courses require higher grades than indicated above or additional evidence of your suitability such as a portfolio or audition. This is specified in the entry requirements for each course on our website.
- Equivalent qualifications will be considered.
- In exceptional circumstances, applications which do not meet the formal entry criteria may be considered on an individual basis.

APPRENTICESHIPS

Level 2 - English and maths grade 3 or equivalent

Level 3 or above - English and maths grade 4 or equivalent

LEWIS' STORY



Lewis' ambition to work in the media industry began when he was 12-years-old.

After taking his GCSEs at school he enrolled on a Level 2 Media course at the College's Booth Lane campus.

He said: "Staying on at school was not an option for me and the college provided another route into the industry.

"Compared to school, it was a lot better - the tutors were great, and the whole experience was positive because we wanted to be there.

"I enjoyed the practical side of the course – the photography room and video studio, I spent time in there producing short films and have fond memories of my time there."

After completing the Level 2 course, Lewis moved up to Level 3 Media, to enhance his skills further and prepare for a degree studying Television and Broadcasting at Portsmouth University. He explained: "Having come straight from college gave me a better understanding of the practical side of the degree course."

Today, Lewis is excelling as an Events Technician with a live events company, a role that has taken him across the globe. Most recently, he has been working in the Gulf, working at prestigious festivals and high-profile events.

Looking back on his time at college he concluded: "The facilities are good, the tutors support you, and it definitely gives you a leg up at university and into the industry."

OUR COURSES



We offer exciting full-time courses in a variety of areas including:

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

- Art & Design
- Fashion
- Music
- Performing Arts
- Photography

COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISE

- Beauty Therapy
- Catering
- Hairdressing
- Hospitality
- Patisserie
- Travel & Tourism

BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

- Economics
- Events Management
- Finance
- HR/Law
- Logistics
- Marketing

HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

- Criminology
- English Language
- English Literature
- Geography
- History
- Law
- Politics
- Psychology
- Sociology

CONSTRUCTION AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- Brickwork & Hard Landscaping
- Carpentry and Joinery
- Electrical Installations
- Painting and Decorating
- Plumbing

Although the College takes reasonable care to provide the courses described in this guide, any course may be altered or withdrawn owing to circumstances beyond the College's reasonable control.

MATHS AND SCIENCE

- Applied Science
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Environmental Science
- Maths
- Physics

ENGINEERING

- Engineering
- Fabrication and Welding
- Manufacturing
- Motor Vehicle Engineering

PUBLIC SERVICES AND SPORT

- Childcare
- Health & Social Care
- Uniformed Public Services
- Sport

DIGITAL SKILLS

- Animation
- Computing and IT
- Cyber Security
- Games Design
- Media
- Networking & Emerging Technologies
- Social Media Content Production



For more information on individual courses and entry requirements, visit our website

www.northamptoncollege.ac.uk

STUDY PROGRAMMES

WHEN YOU JOIN THE COLLEGE, YOU ARE SIGNING UP FOR MORE THAN JUST A QUALIFICATION.

Your study programme is made up of the following:

MAIN QUALIFICATION

You have chosen the subject area that you are interested in and we will make sure you are working at the right level and are challenged to achieve the highest level of qualification you can.

DIGITAL SKILLS

Digital Skills form part of our curriculum and you will be supported to realise the powerful effect that using technology can have within your learning. All students aged 16-18 on a full-time study programme will participate in one hour of digital skills per week. Our laptop loan scheme will ensure every student receives a high-quality education experience and there are no barriers to learning.

NC CORE SKILLS

NC Core Skills, built into your course, will help you get ready for your next steps, including work, further study and life in society.

Success in higher education, apprenticeships or employment begins with developing key personal, social and employability skills - all of which are embedded into your study experience at Northampton College. From meeting deadlines to working in teams, every part of college life helps build your core skills. Social skills will be strengthened through group projects and active participation in discussions and presentations.

MATHS AND ENGLISH

Everybody needs maths and English skills in their everyday life as well as in the workplace, where employers expect a good standard in both before they will offer you a job.

All students will continue to improve their maths and English and if you don't have a grade 4 at GCSE, we will work with you to help you achieve this.

WORK EXPERIENCE AND EMPLOYABILITY

When it comes to getting started in the career of your choice and securing the right job, we want our students to stand out from the crowd. As part of your course, you will undertake a work experience placement that will help you adapt to the world of work.

You will get involved in sessions that cover CV writing, interview skills, finding employment, time management, money skills, and personal development to build your confidence.

You will also get to meet local employers when they come into college as visiting speakers or as part of industry visits to business venues.

INDUSTRY PLACEMENTS

Industry placements are an integral part of the T Level courses.

They provide students with a valuable opportunity to develop their practical and technical skills in a role directly relevant to their course with a local employer.

SUPPORT AND PROGRESS

Weekly timetables will include progress and support activities. These may consist of full group activities or one-to-one sessions to discuss individual progress and support needs.

MELANIE'S STORY

Melanie always knew she wanted to be a nurse - from a young age, she cared deeply for others and was naturally drawn to making others feel better, happier and well-cared for.

Originally from Ghana, she relocated to England in 2018 after completing her exams, joining her family who had already made the move.

"It was quite a big transition," she recalls. "Starting college in a new country and joining the Level 3 Health and Social Care course at Northampton College was daunting, but I took it in my stride and made friends quickly."

College proved to be a welcoming and empowering experience for Melanie.

"My teachers were really supportive, so good at communicating and I always had plenty of guidance, which helped me stay focused and motivated."

During her time at the College, Melanie took part in a work placement at a nursing home, allowing her to apply her learning in practical, meaningful ways.

"My placement laid the groundwork for my hospital experience. I loved being able to perform tasks under supervision - it made everything feel real."

Melanie now works at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham, where she manages diverse patients and conditions with growing confidence.





STUDENT SUPPORT

AT NORTHAMPTON COLLEGE, WE PUT OUR STUDENTS AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING WE DO.

Our highly qualified teachers and support staff are dedicated specialists who will guide you in developing new skills, expanding your knowledge, and building the personal and employability skills needed to succeed.

ACADEMIC COACHES

You will be allocated an academic coach, ensuring you always have someone to turn to for advice, help or support with your Study Programme. They will agree your personal learning targets, talk about your progress and record your achievements.

MENTORING AND PERSONAL SUPPORT

We provide a range of support to help you with any issues that affect your time at college whether they are linked to your personal life or college work. Staff are available at all our campuses to discuss any problems or concerns you might have

SAFEGUARDING

We take the welfare of our students very seriously and aim to create a learning environment where students are safe from abuse or harm. Within college this may

include lessons, social settings, work placements, apprenticeships or educational trips and visits. Outside of college this may include any disclosures made to us about incidents, at home, at work or regarding specific individuals.

GETTING TO COLLEGE

Many students walk to college, but we also cater for drivers and cyclists. If you prefer public transport, then buses are quick and convenient and all three of our campuses have good links. Wherever you live in the county, one of our campuses is within an easy journey.

LEARNING SUPPORT

The College has developed its support for students over successive years. We are committed to ensuring that students with additional needs, learning difficulties or disabilities, e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia, AD(H)D, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), sensory or physical difficulties are given the support they need to succeed.

EDUCATION HEALTH & CARE PLANS (EHCP)

If you have an EHCP, you need to ensure that the Local Authority know that you want to join Northampton College, and also make sure that you also apply for a course, on our website. Talk to your school SENDCO if you need any advice on this.



ENRICHMENT

When you apply for a university place, training scheme, or job opportunity, you will need to show evidence of wider achievements as well as good grades.

Universities and employers want to know about your other skills, including leadership, teamwork, motivation, commitment and time management.

Engaging in group projects, presentations, enrichment activities and the Students' Union helps grow your confidence and leadership - preparing you for what comes next.

Our enrichment programme will help you to demonstrate all of these skills, and whatever activities you choose to do, you'll have fun and boost your self-confidence at the same time.

Day trips are also a great way to meet new people, explore different places, gain fresh experiences, and develop your social skills.

ACTIVITIES

- Sport and fitness events (football, table tennis, gym, boxing, archery)
- Music (learn to sing or play the drums)
- Sign language
- Driving test theory
- Clay modelling
- Car maintenance
- Pokemon Showdown

Plus many more!



DAY TRIPS

- Alton Towers
- Warner Bros. Studio Tour
- Thorpe Park
- Ice skating



APPRENTICESHIPS

EARN WHILE YOU LEARN AND GAIN VALUABLE QUALIFICATIONS AT THE SAME TIME

As an apprentice you will be in employment and benefit from a combination of study with practical training in the workplace.

You will also:

- Work alongside experienced staff
- Gain job specific skills, knowledge and behaviours
- Earn a wage and get holiday pay
- Study towards valuable qualifications.

Apprenticeships take one to four years to complete depending on the level and job. They are an increasingly popular choice for students who want to start their careers and develop their skills in the workplace. On an Apprenticeship you will learn practical skills at work, gain the expert knowledge you need to excel and develop the professional behaviours that employers value.

Northampton College works in partnership with hundreds of local employers to offer Apprenticeships in many areas so there is an exciting range of options to choose from.

We have a dedicated team on hand to support you every step of the way and can help with finding a job, writing your CV and preparing for interviews.

Apprenticeships are available in a range of areas, such as:

Accounting, Brickwork, Business Administration, Carpentry, Early Years, Electrical Installation, Engineering, Fabrication and Welding, Footwear Manufacturing, Management and Team Leading, Motor Vehicle - Light Vehicle, Heavy Vehicle and Paint Refinishing, Painting and Decorating and Property Maintenance.

These Apprenticeship areas may be subject to change.



CHARLIE'S STORY

Bright spark Charlie wants to pursue a career as an electrician after joining the Level 3 Electrical Apprentice course at Northampton College.

The aspiring electrician is grateful to the College for providing her with vital electrical knowledge and skills that she needs to succeed in her chosen industry.

"The opportunities that this course has provided me with to understand electricity have been great," said Charlie.

She added: "I would recommend Northampton College because all the staff here are welcoming and understanding."

Although working with electricals is traditionally a male dominated industry, Charlie is not letting this get in the way of her starting a career as an electrician.

She said: "Being in a male-dominated industry does not affect me in any way because everyone still treats me the same and not like an outcast."

To celebrate Women in Construction Week, Charlie competed against other aspiring female electricians from across the region in an all-female competition.

Charlie said: "I joined the competition not just for the thrill, but for the invaluable experience it offered. It was great to connect with other talented female electricians and is a good addition to my CV."

In the future, Charlie is hoping to learn additional electrical skills, such as installing car chargers, air pumps and air source heat pumps.



T-LEVELS

T Levels are designed to give you a head start towards the future you want. Endorsed by businesses, they include an industry placement to help you learn what a real career is like.

EQUIVALENT TO 3 A LEVELS

T Levels follow on from GCSEs and are an alternative to A Level courses, apprenticeships and other 16 to 18 study programmes. Equivalent to 3 A Levels, a T Level focuses on vocational skills and can help you move into skilled employment, higher education or an Apprenticeship.

INDUSTRY PLACEMENT

The T Level qualification brings classroom learning and industry placements together on a course designed to prepare you for the world of work.

Each T Level includes an in-depth industry placement with a local employer that lasts at least 45 days. Students get valuable experience in the workplace and employers get early sight of the new talent in their industry.

We offer:

Accounting	BL
Design and Development: Electrical and Electronic Engineering	BL
Design and Development: Mechanical Engineering	BL
Design, Surveying and Planning for Construction	BL
Digital Software Development	BL
Digital Support and Security	BL
Education and Early Years	BL/DAV
Education and Early Years - Assisting Teaching	BL
Health (Adult Nursing)	BL
Health (Supporting the Care of Children and Young People)	BL
Laboratory Science	BL
Management and Administration	BL

Key: BL - Booth Lane DAV - Daventry

WHY CHOOSE T LEVELS?

1 CREATED WITH BUSINESSES IN MIND

T Levels have been designed with leading businesses and employers to give you the knowledge and skills you need to succeed in the workplace.

2 GET AHEAD IN YOUR CAREER

T Levels give you the chance to learn what a real career is like while you continue your studies.

3 QUALIFICATIONS THAT COUNT

T Levels are nationally recognised qualifications that are accepted by many universities and are a great stepping stone into full-time employment. See the universities currently accepting T Level qualifications on GOV.UK.

4 LEARN YOUR WAY

T Levels involve more classroom study than apprenticeships, which means you can experience an industry while you continue your studies.

NC6, our A Level study programme, provides students aged 16-18 with an enriching academic experience.

Our brand-new £100k sixth form centre at Booth Lane features dedicated study spaces and purpose-built classrooms, designed to complement the state-of-the-art facilities in our main campus building. With aspirational guidance and support, we encourage students to aim high, with many progressing into higher education, apprenticeships and exciting careers.

A LEVEL STUDY PROGRAMME

If you are aged 16-18, you will join a Study Programme. Throughout the programme, you will engage in three core A Level subjects, each receiving 5 hours of delivery per week, spread over three 1.5-hour sessions. This model ensures maximum regular contact with each subject, enabling a deep understanding of the course material and encouraging active participation in class discussions.

Your academic progress will be complemented by an additional 1.5 hours per week dedicated to tutorial/soft and green skills. This time will be devoted to nurturing essential life skills and building your confidence, allowing you to excel not only academically but also in your personal development.

Self-study is an integral part of the A Level experience, providing you with 5 hours per week to delve into the subjects' content independently. This self-directed learning approach fosters critical thinking, time management, and problem-solving skills, equipping you for the demands of higher education and beyond.

For more information on individual courses and entry requirements, visit our website northamptoncollege.ac.uk

YOUR CHOICE OF A LEVEL SUBJECTS

Our Sixth Form Centre will enable you to progress on to higher education and will include work experience, enterprise and study skills development.

Your subject choices should reflect your study interests, academic strengths, and long-term higher education and career intentions.

A Levels are two-year courses, and all students must select three A Levels from the range of subjects below:

- Art
- Biology
- Business
- Chemistry
- Core Maths*
- Criminology (Diploma)
- Economics
- English Language
- English Literature
- Environmental Science (Sustainability)
- Geography
- History
- Law
- Maths
- Media
- Physics
- Politics
- Psychology
- Sociology

* Core Maths is designed for students who have achieved a grade 4 or higher in GCSE Maths but have not opted to take A Level Maths. It is a one-year qualification that can be studied alongside A Levels.

HOW TO APPLY

A STEP BY STEP GUIDE

Firstly, check the course information on our website to see if you have, or are predicted to achieve, the entry requirement to join the course.

Approximate Timescales

October



Complete the Application form online.

Applications for 2026/27 are now open and the earlier you submit, the better. Many of our most popular courses fill up quickly, and late applicants may find themselves placed on a waiting list. We will contact you via email with your offer, updates and joining instructions. Please state your email address clearly on the application form.

Online – Same day



Your application will be processed by the Enrolment Centre.

1 day



We send you an acknowledgement (by email)

1 week



Your offer

Your application will be processed within a few working days, and you will be made an offer by email or you will be given alternative advice. Please make sure we have the right email address and keep an eye on your junk mail. This offer is subject to you meeting the specific entry requirements. You will be asked to confirm that you still want the place on GCSE results day and upload the evidence of the achieved grades. Please note that it does not guarantee you a place as places are limited. Once maximum class sizes are reached you may be placed on a waiting list. You may be required to complete a task or participate in a workshop to establish your level of ability.

June/July



You will be invited to a taster day.

July/August



During July and August we will send you lots of information about your course, induction and how to prepare for college life.

On or after GCSE results day



We will send you a text on GCSE results day.

You will need to confirm that you have met the entry requirements for your course and that you would like to join us in September. You will be asked to confirm your place if you have not done so already and asked to upload a photograph for your student ID card. Until we have your results and confirmation, we cannot guarantee that your place will remain available.

If you haven't met the entry requirements, you may be able to choose a different course or request further guidance.

**End of August/
early September**



You will be asked to complete an online enrolment.

Starting your studies



You will be given a start date and your timetable. Then you simply attend college for your first class.

Booth Lane, Northampton NN3 3RF
Tel: 01604 734567

Lower Mounts, Northampton NN1 3DE
Tel: 01604 736200



Daventry, Badby Road West,
Daventry NN11 4HJ
Tel: 01604 736393

E: enquiries@northamptoncollege.ac.uk
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 **Northampton**
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