

## ***CAREERS AND HIGHER EDUCATION***

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At Ashton on Mersey Sixth Form, the main aim of the Careers Team is to support and help the students make well informed and realistic choices about their future plans, be it entering Higher Education or Employment. Students will be encouraged to acquire knowledge and an awareness of opportunities that will enable them to engage with their own career planning. The team works in conjunction with Career Advisers for Connexions Trafford and offers:

- Individual career guidance interviews
- Delivery of a career education programme
- Organised events, guest speakers and Open Day trips
- Promotion of career related opportunities
- Guidance with Work Shadowing
- Provision of excellent career resources in the Isite (information site)

Students first point of contact, after tutors, should be Mrs. V. Berry, our Careers Coordinator, whose role is to organise the events and visits, manage the Work Shadowing scheme and to signpost towards the correct information. In addition, she will support students through the process of progression whether that is the application process into Higher Education or Employment.

## ***CAREER GUIDANCE INTERVIEWS***

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Evelyn Eyong and Jane Baker (careers advisers from Connexions Trafford) are here to help and are in school Monday – Thursday offering individual guidance interviews to students.

*They provide impartial advice, information and guidance on:*

- Choices after AS/A levels or Applied AS/A levels/BTEC
- Options – whether Higher Education, Year Out or Employment
- Enrichments to provide evidence for applications to University / Employment
- Finance – especially for Higher Education applications

*Support with:*

- Exam stress
- Personal, health or relationship issues

## ***OPTIONS AFTER 6<sup>TH</sup> FORM***

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- Higher Education
- Professional Apprenticeships
- Employment
- Gap Year

## ***HIGHER EDUCATION – What is it exactly?***

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Courses at a higher level than A Levels/Applied A Levels/BTECs  
They can be taken at:

- University
- Higher Education Colleges
- Further Education Colleges
- Colleges of Art and Design
- Colleges of Music

There are various levels of courses; the one you choose is up to you. You may choose to study a totally new subject that you have not studied at A level, however, any offer will depend on the grades/points you achieve.

## ***TYPES OF QUALIFICATION***

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### **Degree – Usually Full-time resulting in a BA or BSc**

- Lasts for 3 years or more
- Some have a year in industry (sandwich course)
- Usually need 2 A levels or more Applied A level/BTEC ND at special grades

### **HND – Higher National Diploma**

- Lasts two years
- Is full time
- Work related subjects such as Business, I.T., Social Care etc.
- Can lead to a degree
- Usually need 1-2 A levels/Applied A levels/BTEC ND for entry

### **Foundation Degree**

- Lasts two years
- Offered full-time, part-time, distance learning or in the workplace
- In work related subjects

## ***APPLYING TO HIGHER EDUCATION***

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UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) is the organisation responsible for managing applications to higher education (HE) courses in the U.K.

- To apply for full-time Degrees, HNDs, Foundation Degrees and Foundation Courses you need to APPLY ONLINE through school
- You can apply for 5 PLACES
- There is a small charge of for this service through UCAS
- To choose the right option for you – SEARCH AND RESEARCH FIRST (with 50,000 courses to choose from this is vital)
- Attend university open days to get a feel for things
- Sign on to [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) and do the Stamford Test. This matches interests and abilities to possible subject choices
- Use the UCAS web site course search to link with the universities which offer courses that you are interested in. Check the Course/Entry Profiles carefully, either on the internet or in the prospectus
- Use the UCAS 'Big Map' to locate the universities

### **When to Apply**

- From July 2009 onwards students register online with UCAS using the school buzzword and creating a login and password
- First draft of personal statement to be completed before Summer break
- Final draft of personal statement to be completed by end of September 2009
- Reference to be submitted to Mr Moloney by Autumn half term break
- Closing date for application from Ashton-on-Mersey is November 15<sup>th</sup> 2009

### **What Next?**

- Students receive a welcome letter with personal number needed for all communication with UCAS or universities
- Tracking: this is the UCAS online system to view an individual application, any offers and invitations to interviews
- Students only accept or reject offers when all five universities have replied
- Students may receive a conditional offer or an unconditional offer
- The deadline for students to decide is in May 2010
- Only TWO offers can be accepted – one is the firm acceptance (a student's first choice) and the other is the insurance acceptance (a student's second choice)
- Support will be available from the Careers Team if you are invited for a university interview

## ***APPRENTICESHIP / EMPLOYMENT***

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Some employers are keen to recruit Advanced students. They say they are:

- More mature (than 16 year olds)
- Better skilled
- Keen to learn
- Motivated

Certain industries and business organisations advertise specifically for Advanced students – accountants, I.T., engineering, insurance and banking for example. The Professional Apprenticeship scheme looks for Advanced students too.

- From March onwards Careers Advisers from Connexions Trafford will bring in details of Apprenticeship/Employment vacancies which will be displayed on the Careers Noticeboard. They will also be available to see students who are considering Apprenticeship/Employment on a one to one basis.
- Support will be available with creating a C.V. and letters of application.

## ***GAP YEAR***

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- There will be the opportunity to visit gap year companies at the Higher Education Convention at G Mex
- Information is available in the Careers section in the Isite
- See the Careers Advisers at school for further guidance

## ***STUDENT FINANCE***

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- Check this website [www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance](http://www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance) for information on loans and grants
- Jobseekers Allowance (J.S.A.) and Benefits
- See the Careers Team for further help

## **OTHER HELP AVAILABLE FROM YOUR CAREERS TEAM**

We can also help with:

- C.V.s
- Letters supporting C.V.s
- Application letters
- Completing application forms
- Ideas of companies to apply for
- The Isite houses an extensive collection of books and resources including a prospectus for most British universities
- Advice sessions on writing a Personal Statement, Life as a Student, Open Days and Student Finance from Salford University

### **Useful Websites**

#### **Higher Education**

- [www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk) - information on courses, institutions etc.
- [www.hotcourses.com](http://www.hotcourses.com)
- [www.opendays.com](http://www.opendays.com)
- [www.universityoptions.co.uk](http://www.universityoptions.co.uk)
- [www.uni4me.com](http://www.uni4me.com) - information on all aspects of going to university
- [www.push.co.uk](http://www.push.co.uk) - student view of life at each HEI
- [www.aimhigher.ac.uk](http://www.aimhigher.ac.uk)

#### **Finance for Higher Education**

- [www.dfes.gov.uk/studentsupport](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/studentsupport)
- [www.slc.co.uk](http://www.slc.co.uk) - student loan company
- [www.scholarship-search.org.uk](http://www.scholarship-search.org.uk)
- [www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance](http://www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance)
- [www.bursarymap.direct.gov.uk](http://www.bursarymap.direct.gov.uk)

#### **Apprenticeships / Employment**

- [www.apprenticeship.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeship.org.uk)
- [www.manchesteronline.co.uk](http://www.manchesteronline.co.uk) - regional job vacancies
- [www.monster.co.uk](http://www.monster.co.uk)
- [www.cnx2jobs.com](http://www.cnx2jobs.com)

#### **Gap Year**

- [www.gapyear.com](http://www.gapyear.com)
- [www.gap.org.uk](http://www.gap.org.uk)
- [www.bunac.org.uk](http://www.bunac.org.uk)

#### **Young Persons Links**

- [www.connexions-trafford.org.uk](http://www.connexions-trafford.org.uk)
- [yp@talkshop.gov.uk](mailto:yp@talkshop.gov.uk) - Sale Talk Shop email address
- [www.connexions.gov.uk](http://www.connexions.gov.uk) - Government Connexions website

- [www.theaward.org](http://www.theaward.org) - Duke of Edinburgh Award

As well as checking out these websites, check out newspapers such as:

- Jobs North West
- Manchester Evening News (especially on a Thursday)