



THE BISHOP'S STORTFORD HIGH SCHOOL

**Post-18
Information Evening
Tuesday 6th March 2018**

PROGRAMME

Agenda:

Mr Stark	Post-18 Options
Mrs Price	University Applications
Mr Stark	Key Components of your Application
	Close

Tuesday 13th March – Oxbridge Information Evening 7.00pm

Dr Sewell, Tutor for Admissions at Selwyn College and recently retired Director of Admissions of the Cambridge Colleges, will be running an informal session for anyone interested in understanding more about Oxford and Cambridge Universities and especially what to expect and how to prepare for applications.

Please notify Fiona Price on fiona.price@tbshs.org if you wish to attend this evening and how many places you would like to reserve – number to include student and parent(s).

Choices after TBSHS

You are faced with a huge amount of choice and there are any number of websites to help you with research into your possible post-18 options. Some links are listed below but please also check out the *Life beyond TBSHS* section of the school website for further documentation and useful links. www.tbshs.org/sixthform.aspx?SubCatID=235

Career/Course Ideas

<http://sacu-student.com/> - The Spartan Quiz ([Spartan Test - SACU](#)) is an excellent visual quiz that generates interactive careers, subject and apprenticeship clouds. Click on links within each cloud to get more information about the each option. If you register you can save your results and go back and refine your research.

<http://icould.com> – The Buzz Quiz ([Buzz Quiz - icould](#)) is a very brief career wizard to generate ideas and also videos and articles of practitioners in various careers so you can find out more about the realities of the job.

www.prospects.ac.uk - a more detailed questionnaire to generate post-graduate career suggestions.

www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk– Careers advice and career planning tools – the Skills Health Check is a set of quizzes and activities designed to help you explore your skills, interests and motivations.

www.bestcourse4me.com - allows you to explore career and course options.

[Careers of the Future.pdf](#)– December 2014 report from the UK Commission for Employment and Skills on research highlighting the top 40 jobs over the next decade.

Plus:

- Talk to teachers, family members and friends about their jobs and how they got into them
- Get involved in societies, activities, get a job, work experience or do some volunteering to find out more about what you are good at and what working life is like
- Look at blogs, documentaries, read the newspaper and relevant trade or subject magazines to open your mind to different subject areas, sectors and jobs

University

- Gain depth and breadth of understanding in your chosen area.
- Develop critical and analytical skills
- A sound investment:
- Average starting salary for graduates: £24,000 p.a.
- Average graduate earns 30%+ (£4,000 to 12,000 p.a.) more than his/her equivalent with A-Levels only
- Following the recession, graduate employment rates back above 2007 levels and continuing to rise. In 2016, there was a consecutive fourth year rise in numbers taken on by the top 100 graduate employers of 1.6% and these are expected to increase by over 4% this year despite uncertainties over Brexit)
- An enjoyable experience

www.unifrog.org – The school subscribes to this university and apprenticeship research, choice and selection tool. It provides a superb front-end and pulls together information from many of the key sites listed below but tailored to the user's particular interests and academic ability. Each Year 12 student already has a user-id and has had a chance to use the tool. This will be fundamental to their university research.

www.ucas.com - The University and Colleges Admission Service is what all applicants to University will use to apply to university. It also covers Foundation Degrees and other

qualifications. Includes a range of information including a course search tool. Lots of parental and student advice including guides and videos.

Also helpful:

<http://sacu-student.com/> - use interactive subject cloud from Spartan test. Also has an A level subject checker – shows you courses followed by other people with your subject combination

<http://unistats.direct.gov.uk/> - provides Government detailed, unbiased comparative data university data. Unifrog uses this data directly

The HEAP Guide – hardcopy available in the school Library. Lists Entry Requirements for different degree courses in order of grade requirements so good for identifying unis that are within your academic reach. BUT MUCH EASIER TO USE UNIFROG

www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/ - extensive information and comparative tables about universities as well as information about graduate career prospects and salaries

www.whatuni.com – has a course search tool which allows you to search on basis of your likely grades. Good Open Day information.

www.opendays.com/ - centralised site for searching university Open days

www.gov.uk/apply-for-student-finance - details about applying for student finance. Full information and interactive resources and guides are available on their partner site of the

www.thestudentroom.com at [Prospective students - Resources - The Student Room](#)

www.studentladder.co.uk/ – wealth of articles, advices and resources for university and jobs

www.thescholarshipclub.org.uk/ - search for grants, bursaries, scholarships available from different universities

- Graduate career choices/salaries

www.prospects.ac.uk

www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/careers/ - includes variety of career guides

Articles covering graduate starting salaries and graduate premiums from 2015-2016 [What Do Graduates Do and Earn? - Complete University Guide.](#)

High Fliers – [The Graduate Market in 2017](#) - latest research into graduate vacancies and starting salaries at the UK's 100 best-known and most successful employers. Based on research in December 2016. 2018 Report will be available in March/April.

Apprenticeships/School Leaver Programmes

- Work for a company, gain job specific experience and skills – “Learn and Earn”
- Spend some time at a university/college completing various courses leading to a professional qualification
- Usually funded by the company and government
- Lots of variety – retail, business, engineering, leisure, construction, media, design, Intelligence Services, law
- Increasing numbers available; major focus of government policy with introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy. From April this year, companies with a payroll bill in excess of £3m will pay 0.5% of it to government who will add a further 10%. Funds are available to the company to spend on Apprenticeship training within 18 months or otherwise are “lost”.
- New range of Degree Level Apprenticeships being developed and introduced by over 100 major industries in conjunction with 20 universities plus development of Apprenticeships standards through the Trailblazer programme

www.unifrog.org – Apprenticeship Tool providing a front-end to pull together information from many of sites to allow exploration of different industry sectors together with labour market information. Links in to the National Apprenticeships database of vacancies run by the government (see next item).

www.gov.uk/topic/further-education-skills/apprenticeships - national Government website for Apprenticeships where all apprenticeship providers are encourage to register vacancies. Information and search facility at: www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship
www.studentladder.co.uk/ - information about School Leaver Programs, CVs, selection processes including on-line testing, work placements, summer internships
www.notgoingtouni.co.uk – apprenticeship search facility
<http://sacu-student.com/> - use interactive cloud from Spartan test.
www.successatschool.org – [Click here: A Parent's Guide to Apprenticeships.](#)

Plus search for School Leaver Programmes/Apprenticeships on company websites.

Vocational Qualifications

- HNCs (Higher National Certificates) and HNDs (Higher National Diplomas) are work-related (vocational) higher education qualifications
- Designed to give you the skills to put knowledge to effective use in a particular job
- Provided by over 400 universities and further education colleges

www.unifrog.org – Further Education Tool allows easy research and shortlisting of Further Education courses available in different subject areas
www.ucas.com – College course search facility
www.notgoingtouni.co.uk – College and further education search facility

Gap Year

- Well planned, structured and productive: could be a good option
- Employers will not look favourably on a poorly organised gap year with no focus or benefit to your development – do something meaningful
- Volunteer to help others and put your skills to the test, maybe discover a different culture and learn a new language
- Gain relevant experiences in the area you wish to study/work
www.gap-year.com www.frontiergap.com
www.notgoingtouni.co.uk www.yearoutgroup.org
www.gapmedics.co.uk www.projecttrust.org.uk

Straight into work

Positives

- Earn money and gain work-related skills

Things to think about

- Is it going to challenge/develop you?
- Are you gaining any further qualifications?
- What prospects are there for you in the future – will you still be doing the same job?
- Unemployment levels are relatively high – will a more qualified or less qualified person be employed?

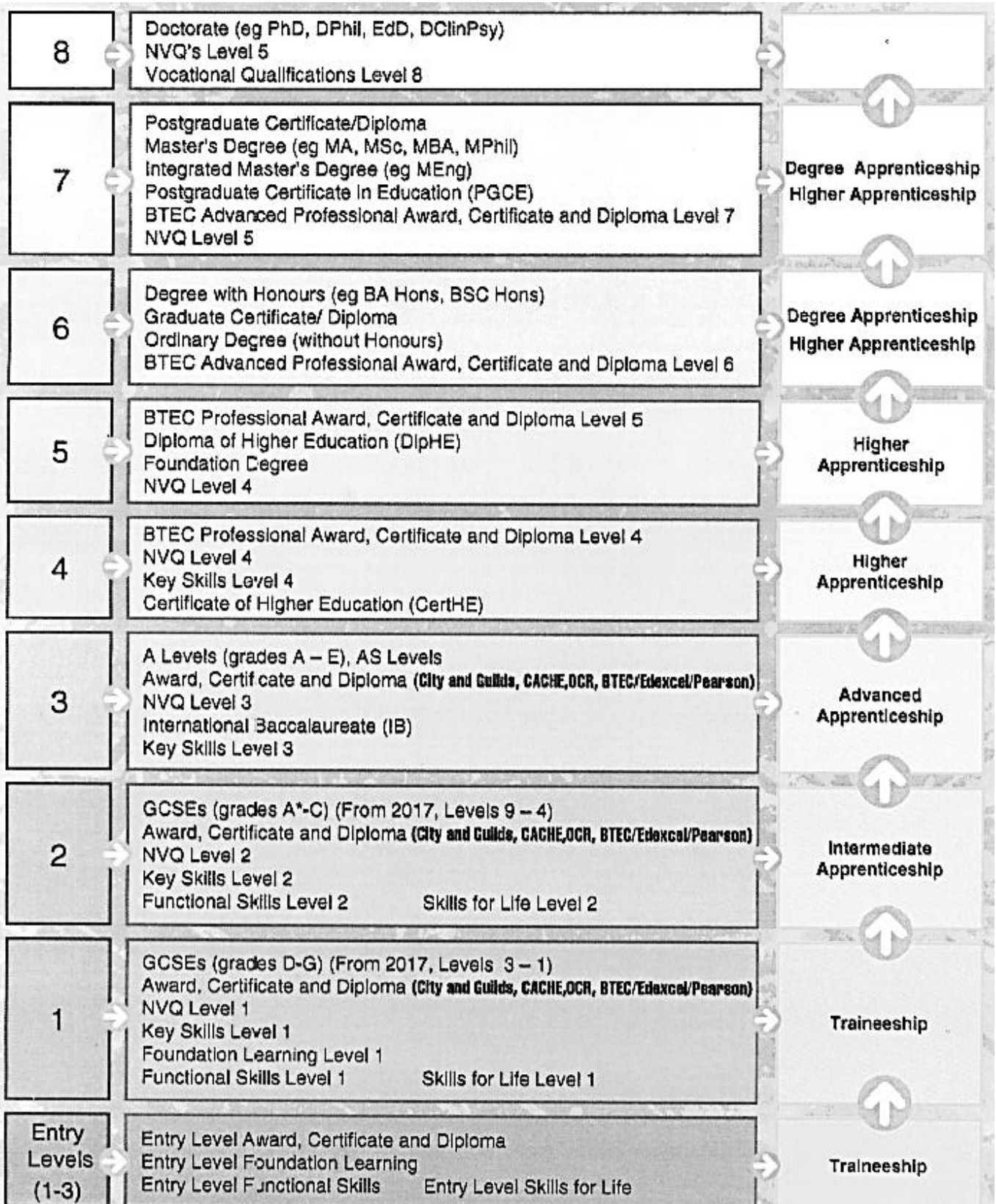
All the following allow you to search for jobs and contain CV and interview advice.

www.cv-library.co.uk - UK's leading independent job board. Can apply directly to over 120,000 live vacancies from across the UK from over 70 different sectors.
www.jobisjob.co.uk/ <http://www.totaljobs.com/>
www.notgoingtouni.co.uk www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk

Post-18 Timeline

- **Unifrog Introduction and Registration:** Tuesday 20th Feb
- **CV Preparation Tutorials:** 26th February and 12th March
- **Post-18 Preparation Tutorial 1:** Monday 5th March
- **Post-18 Information Evening:** Tuesday 6th March
- **Post-18 Research:** exploring careers, entry routes and requirements, courses, booking Open Day Visits, job searching, using Unifrog, completing applications – Wednesday 7th March onwards
- **Apprenticeships:** Visiting Speakers Thursday 15th March period 2
- **Post-18 Preparation Tutorial 2:** Q&A with Year 13s plus Year 13 Top Tips – Monday 19th March
- **CV Submission Deadline** (in preparation for Rotary Interviews): 19th March
- **Higher Education Convention:** Wednesday 18th April
- **Student Life:** Visiting Speakers Thursday 19th April period 2
- **Year 12 Rotary Interviews:** Held with external business professionals Thursday 3rd May
- **Personal Statement/CV Workshop:** Thursday 17th May
- **Personal Statement 1st Draft /CV update** to Tutors: 3rd June
- **Year 12 Post-18 Gateway Exams:** 18th – 22nd June
- **Year 12 Work Experience Week:** 25th – 29th June
- **Personal Statement 2nd Draft** to Tutors: 6th July
- **All Open Days/visits completed; basic details entered in UCAS; long list of Universities:** End of Summer Term (20th July)
- **Personal Statement/CV finalised** by: 21st September
- **UCAS applications completed** and “sent” to Tutor: 21st September
- **Oxbridge/Medical applications submitted** by 15th October
- **Final UCAS applications sent off:** Thursday 25th October
- **Employment/Apprenticeship/Higher Education Applications:** Autumn Term 2018 onwards

Qualification Routes post-16



University

Choose your course first and then your university. Ask yourself the following questions to develop initial lists of possibilities:

Choosing the right course

- **Will the course keep your interest for at least three years and what are you good at?**
You should certainly choose something which you can talk about at interview (if called) and show an interest in on your Personal Statement. You may decide to deepen your grasp of one of your A-Level subjects, you may decide to study a new subject or you may decide to study for Combined Honours degree.
- **Will a degree from this course be useful to you after university?**
Is it actually required for your career choice? Does it provide good career opportunities? Does it keep doors open? Does it give you the chance for further study? Many departments can provide destination lists for former graduates.
- **Will you achieve the grades required to study the course?**
Be optimistic but realistic.
- **Do you have the required subjects at GCSE and A Level?**
Some universities consider some subjects as “soft” and favour more academically rigorous ones. They may have combinations they consider unacceptable. Check detailed course entry requirements and look at [Informed-choices-2018-1-6th-edition-final.pdf](#) from the Russell Group. Use A-Level course checker in <http://sacu-student.com/>.
- **Are you capable of being successful on the course?**
- **What reputation and resources does the department have?**
- **Do the first year examination results count towards the degree?**
- **What is the proportion of examination and coursework?**
- **Is it a modular course with a flexible structure?**
- **How long is the course?**
- **Are there possibilities to study abroad for a year or to have one year’s work experience?**
- **Is there the possibility of sponsorship?**
There are a number of companies that offer “Learn as you Earn” opportunities.
- **Is this course available at your preferred university?**
You can study an array of subjects but cannot do all of them everywhere. Study course descriptions carefully, not all university courses on the same subject area are identical and might cover topics in which you are not so interested.

Choosing a University

Like courses, you have to choose somewhere where you think you will be happy for at least three years. You will be able to apply for up to five different university/course combinations and you should consider the following points when deciding on a university:

- **Is it in the right area of the country?**
Close to home / as far away as possible.
- **Is the area expensive to live in?**
London in particular can be expensive.
- **What did you make of it when you went for the Open Day?**
- **Do you want to go to a campus or city university?**
- **What are the academic facilities like?**
How many libraries are there? Are they open 24 hours a day? Are there plenty of computing facilities?
- **What is the quality/availability of accommodation (particularly in the first year)?**
How much does it cost? Can all first year students be accommodated? How far is accommodation from place of study? Self-catering or meals provided?
- **Do they offer the extra-curricular activities you want and how good are their recreational facilities?**
- **What do former TBSHS students and other students think of it?**
- **Does it generally have a good academic reputation as well as being strong in your subject area?**
Are academic staff leaders in their field and active in research and publication? How much contact time will you get through lectures, seminars, tutorials and practicals.
- **Is it a “Russell Group” University?**
This is a group of 24 larger universities where membership is dependent on leadership in research and academic teaching (Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Cardiff, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Oxford, Sheffield, Southampton, Warwick, York and Imperial, Kings College London, LSE, Queen Mary UL, UCL and Queens University Belfast). They tend to have a good reputation amongst employers but are by no means the only elite or good universities. Other groupings of universities exist with a particular mission such as the Million+ and the University Alliance who have a specific remit of business engagement.
- **What is its Careers Advisory Service like and does it have good links with industry and employers?**
Do they focus on employability, providing guidance and development of transferable skills relevant to the workplace? Do they help you look for placements and internships and do they have any specific links with companies?

Resources

Use the following sources of information to inform your choices:

- Unifrog University Tool
- University Prospectuses (*on-line and in the school Library*)
- Careers Publications (*school Library*)
- Form tutor, subject staff and Sixth Form Management Team
- Post-18 Section of the School Website
- Post-18 Bulletins
- Post-18 Information Boards in Sixth Form Centre
- Websites – see links above plus also individual university websites
- Higher Education Convention
- University Open Days
- University Subject Taster Sessions
- Friends and Relatives
- Teaching Staff
- Former Students

Student Finance

Is university too expensive?

- Up to £9,250 per annum tuition fees – not paid up front, only start to repay when earning over £21,000
- Repayment is 9% of amount earned above £21,000 e.g. if earning £25,000, monthly repayment is £30
- The monthly repayment is not linked to the size of the debt
- Outstanding debt is written off after 30 years
- Scholarships, bursaries and grants available www.thescholarshipclub.org.uk/

Also look at:

www.gov.uk/apply-for-student-finance,
www.thestudentroom.co.uk/content.php?r=5659-Student-Finance,
<http://www.practitioners.slc.co.uk/supporting-materials/> – variety of parental and prospective student guides

Students need to apply for finance from February 2019 for courses starting in September 2019.

There are also Maintenance Loans available through Student Finance to help with costs of living while at university. Maintenance Grants (monies that did not need to be repaid) no longer exist but higher levels of Maintenance Loan have been made available. Individual institutions offer Bursaries to help those from low income families. There are also scholarships based on particular ability or achievement in academic or extra-curricular fields and grants that can be given for achievement, personal circumstance or financial need.

Study abroad is also an option, e.g. in the Netherlands, courses are taught in English and fees are lower than in the UK. Scholarships are available at American universities.

www.topuniversities.com (study abroad; useful guides a search tool in the Discover section)
www.fulbright.org.uk (Study in the USA) www.thestudentworld.com (Study abroad)
www.studyineurope.eu (Study in Europe) www.campusfrance.org/en (Study in France)

UCAS References and Predicted Grades

UCAS References

The School aims to give every student the best possible reference. It is often the first thing the university admissions tutor reads.

- **Provisional University Information to tutors**
Your form tutor will be monitoring and tracking your decision making through your use of Unifrog but will ask you to provide the information regarding your chosen universities, courses and their likely grade requirements towards the end of the summer term.
- **Subject staff provide subject references to tutors**
This information will be subject-specific feedback focussing on particular areas of strength and knowledge within each subject area. For example, subject teachers might mention powers of analysis or interpretation along the lines of “She can compare and weigh the factors affecting the rise of Communism (History)”. UCAS references focus on the positive.
- **Your tutor writes your UCAS reference**
Your form tutor will then compile a balanced UCAS reference citing the information provided by your subject teachers. It is vital that they have your completed UCAS form (on-line) to refer to when writing your reference.

Predicted Grades

The School has to enter predicted grades for all your subjects on your UCAS application.

- **“Best Possible” Grades**
*We will state “**best possible**” grades i.e. the best that you are likely to achieve in the summer not necessarily the grades that you will achieve. These grades will therefore be the projections that you receive in July 2018 which in turn will be heavily influenced by your Post-18 Gateway Examinations results. It is vital that these exams are treated very seriously by students as they will be the only real measure of likely performance in the A2 and BTEC public examinations at the end of Year 13.*
- **Must influence Course/University Choices**
You must take note of the predicted grades when deciding upon a university course. If they are lower than the ones the university states for a particular course, then you are unlikely to receive an offer. Be mindful of the best possible nature of predicted grades and have a spread of entry requirements across your choices (see below).

Grade Requirements – Getting it Right!

It is important that within your final five choices (four for Medicine) you make sure that you have one course requiring grades that are below what you might be expecting and that it is a course that you would want to study. If you don't get the grades you want, then you will have somewhere you have chosen to study rather than going through clearing where you will have less choice. See “University Z” in following example:

University	Grades required
University V	AAB
University W	ABB
University X	ABB
University Y	BBC
University Z	CCC

Points Offers

Some universities make offers based on achieving a certain number of UCAS points rather than a set of grades. The point scores associated with each grade of qualification changed in 2017 but did **not in itself change entry requirements for courses**. Those institutions that used UCAS Tariff points simply set their entry requirements using the new number system. All old points should have disappeared from documentation but may still appear in some employers' materials. A vast range of qualifications are listed in the UCAS Tariff Tables and can be very confusing so the key ones taken at TBSHS are summarised in the table below.

- Universities normally give a points offer based **only on what is achieved in your A2s or BTEC** and **do not count AS points** towards the total
- Universities that give a UCAS point offer may also specify a particular grade or number of points that you need in a subject
- There are also UCAS points associated with speech, drama and music awards (practical and theory) at grades 6, 7 and 8. You only count points for the highest grade that you have passed. Check the UCAS Tariff tables.

Calculating UCAS Points

Look up the point values of your predicted A2 grade for the subjects that you are taking through to A2 and/or your final BTEC predicted level. For example: a student is predicted History A, English B, Politics C for their A2s.

From the A2 Level column, **Total Predicted UCAS Points** = 48 + 40 + 32 = 120

- You only count the highest level of qualification in a subject
- The Extended Project is scored at 50% of an A2 but AS levels are now deemed to be worth only 40% of an A2 rather than 50% under the old system

GCE A Level (A2)	UCAS Tariff Points	BTEC (Nationals) Diploma	UCAS Tariff Points
A*	56	D*D*	112
A	48	D*D	104
B	40	DD	96
C	32	DM	80
D	24	MM	64
E	16	MP	48
Extended Project		PP	32
A*	28		
A	24		
B	20		
C	16		
D	12		
E	8		

Personal Statements

- This is the second most important part of your university application after your predicted grades.
- You will need to explain why you have chosen the subject, why you are well suited and the skills and experiences you have gained. This is where your wider reading, extracurricular involvement, subject and career research, visits to museums, work experience etc will all come into play. We would encourage you to complete an extracurricular activity record ([Extra-Curricular Activity Record](#)) for lectures, articles, books, events to start forming a bank of possible examples to use.
- Your Form Tutor will guide you through the process and you will have a *Personal Statement Writing Workshop* on Thursday 7th May and there are number of resources on the school website and poolfile, UCAS and other sites listed earlier.
- Individual university websites all give guidelines about what they will expect to see in a Personal Statement.
- It is one of the most difficult pieces of work that you will ever write and it will need many drafts to hone it, especially as it has to meet strict character (4,000 including blanks) and line limits (47 lines including blanks). Spelling and grammar need to be correct so rigorous proof-reading is essential.

CVs

- This is the essential document to support job applications.
- You will need to list personal details, your educational qualifications, work experience and your key skills, especially emphasising those transferrable and applicable to the work environment. Again, this is where your wider reading, extracurricular involvement, career research, voluntary or paid work, placements etc. will all come into play together with your extra-curricular interests. Completing an extracurricular activity record ([Extra-curricular Activity Record](#)) as you do things will help you develop appropriate material.
- Your Form Tutor will help you with it and you are in the process of having *CV Writing* guidance. There are a number of resources on the school website and other sites listed earlier.
- You need to regularly update your CV with new experiences and achievements and also tailor it as appropriate for particular job positions to show how you meet the job specification.
- You would normally send your CV with a covering letter which summarises why you are a good candidate for the position.
- Always ensure that your CV is well-formatted and that both spelling and grammar are correct. Employers have to reduce large numbers of applicants to a short list and will be quick to discard an applicant whose CV is poorly presented.