



Summary of Careers Provision
By Mr M C Conway, Head of Higher Education and Careers

Careers Guidance and Higher Education Policy

The aim of Careers Education within Epsom College is to enable the pupils to develop an informed understanding of the world of work, to develop appropriate skills in response to the nature of the world of work, and to develop the students' abilities to make informed decisions at key transitional points. The Careers education within the College is a planned programme including Careers and Higher Education preparation, and is delivered through visits and events, work-related learning and work experience, access to careers and labour market information and one-to-one support, through the Careers Department, PSD department and the House system.

The Careers Department provides pupils with accurate, up-to-date and objective information on opportunities, progression routes and how to access help and advice. Pupils are provided with advice through a programme of activities aimed at enabling the pupil to gather, understand and interpret information. This provision is, in essence, impartial and is designed to enable students to make their own informed decisions at various junctures.

A note on Unifrog

All students, throughout the school, receive a Unifrog account. This is a learning platform that offers students the opportunity to develop their understanding of a range of careers and HE options. Through Unifrog, students are encouraged to consider the range of transferrable skills that they are developing through both their daily Epsom experiences and life outside school, through their academic and co-curricular programme. Through Unifrog, students start recording how they are developing their skills, start logging their career-oriented experiences, and consider how to develop a CV. In the 6th form, they might be using this to refine their post-18 decision-making.

Individual Career Guidance

All pupils are welcome to seek informal advice from the Careers department or to request an appointment if necessary; informal advice is given on a daily basis. Mr Conway's office is in the Mermaid, and he is easily contactable in person by students, or via email: Charles.conway@epsomcollege.org.uk.

Development Plan

- to increase pupil evaluation of events and to continue to adapt the Careers Education programme in response
- to develop effective monitoring of pupil engagement with the opportunities presented to them, from work experience to taster days
- to review Careers provision in line with the Gatsby benchmarks

Lower School (Years 7-8)

Within the taught programme, both year groups will be inducted into Unifrog as a vehicle to introduce student to careers. With the 3rd form, after an introductory assembly, up to four lessons will cover an exploration of the Careers Library, the nature of employability skills, a quiz that assesses their interests, and the hunt for their dream job. Tutors also follow up periodically, in tutor time, the recording of their individual employability skills (maybe once or twice a term). The HoY will also invite parents to bring their son/daughter into the workplace, either in the Easter or Summer holiday, to have that first sense of a professional environment.

In L4, again following a launch assembly with Unifrog, students will explore the Careers library, develop their understanding of relevant terminology (eg what is a CV), further reflect on their skills and design the CV of a superhero. As above, tutors will encourage their tutees to record the development of a range of their employability skills over the year. We also invite a company called The Inspirational Learning Group into College in March to run a competitive Business and Enterprise Day.

Middle Fourth (Year 9)

There is an assembly to ensure new students have a Unifrog account. The Middle Fourth cover Career and choice-making issues through year group activities in assemblies and in tutor groups. Before half-term in the Lent term, pupils undertake Morrisby Aspirations, an online programme designed to help M4th students make connections between academic choices now, various skill-sets, and possible future careers. They discuss the findings of the individual reports with tutors and parents who can access the results. There is an assembly to cover GCSE option choices and a GCSE choices information evening for pupils and their parents. Periodically, as with younger year groups, M4 tutors ask that students update their employability skillset on Unifrog.

Upper Fourth (Year 10)

Students new to the school are introduced to Unifrog. Using Unifrog in a Careers module within the PSD programme, students continue to record how they are developing their skills, develop an understanding of apprenticeships and write their first CV. Tutors supplement this programme with further work in tutor time investigating careers pathways after Epsom.

The U4th welcome in speakers to consider the alternative pathways after Epsom. There are presentations on apprenticeships, university in America and a myth-busting workshop on the nature of university in UK.

In the summer term, students undertake the second stage of their Morrisby testing. The psychometric testing at this stage addresses students' innate skills and aptitudes, as well as their personal preferences and current future thinking. The report is available for discussion with tutors after their exams, and parents over the holiday. Students are also given the holiday task of fine-tuning their CV and applying for a mock work experience post, which is followed up with a mock interview at the beginning of the Michaelmas term.

Throughout the academic year, we host a series of lunchtime careers webinars that students from Years 10-13 can access, when OEs and parents present on their career journey. These are recorded so that students with a clash can listen in to the recording.

Fifth Form (Year 11)

Michaelmas Term

The objective is to give the pupils as much information and support as possible to help them make the right subject choices individually and to encourage and support them in their preparation for the Sixth Form. Early in the term, EC Careers offer a programme of individual careers interviews with all students as a follow up to the Morrisby testing in the previous summer. This encompasses guidance on using the Morrisby report, and culminates in individual plans with next steps, which are accessible to tutors thereafter for following up.

There is also a presentation on life in the 6th form to current pupils and parents, which includes a summary of careers provision in the 6th form at Epsom College. 5th form students are invited to lunchtime careers presentations throughout the academic year.

Work Experience

At the start of term, there is a mock interview programme for all 5th form, in part to focus the mind on applying for work experience. Also in the Michaelmas Term, there is a Work Experience Briefing. All 5th form pupils are expected to undertake work experience placements, and parents receive a letter advising some planning on their part in securing work experience in the coming summer. Medical work experience is closely monitored by the staff with responsibility for medical applications.

Work experience is becoming an increasingly important part of the pupil's profile on leaving Epsom College. Even when applying for internships, university students are expected to have already built up a substantial history of work experience. Pupils need to develop a portfolio of work experience. The World of Work evening in the Lent term (see later), together with the Morrisby profiling, have been designed to prompt the pupils to think about the different working environments that they would like to explore. It is now time for pupils to plan and start their own individual work experience portfolio, which will help inform choices and develop long term goals. A minimum of one period of work experience is recommended over the long summer holiday. Getting into the habit now of organising and taking responsibility for their own work experience programme will serve them well further down the line.

Work experience can take many forms, such as actual work, or work shadowing, where the student follows someone around to see what their job entails. Work shadowing is an excellent and safe way for pupils to gain some insight into the demands of a particular career. It is also important to realise that any form of experience, in whatever career area, can be constructive since it will provide a view of the world of work. We have found that, historically, placements initiated through parents, using family friends and contacts, have provided the best opportunities. Some pupils may already have a clear idea of the sorts of career areas that interest them and may have begun the process of finding a suitable placement already. In some circumstances it has been difficult for parents and/or pupils to organise their own work experience in particular areas. Moreover, we are seeking to encourage students to see the process of seeking work experience independently as an additional and useful learning target. In some circumstances it may be possible for the College, through the OE network, to assist in arranging work experience for a pupil.

Lent Term

In January we host the Sixth Form Academic Choices briefing and Subject Fair in the Humanities Block. This is for current pupils and pupils who will be new in the Sixth Form and parents, with specific talks by

Medical, Oxbridge and American University specialists to assist in forward planning. Careers and house staff are available throughout the year for consultation regarding making A level choices.

We also host our World of Work Evening when a wide range of guest speakers come to talk to pupils in small seminar type groups about the reality of working within a specific industry or working environment. Pupils choose three sessions from a range of approximately 19-20, chosen in response to pupil feedback. Asking guest speakers with a personal connection to the College is pivotal to the success of the evening, both in terms of reliability and empathy.

At the end of term, we invite 5th pupils potentially interested in Medical and related subjects to attend an introductory briefing on the road ahead.

Sixth Form (Years 12-13)

Objectives

- To develop a structured approach to the decision making process during the Sixth Form
- To bring forward the time scale where possible to enhance the success of UCAS applications
- To facilitate successful applications

Lower Sixth

Throughout the year, pupils are encouraged to attend University subject taster days, career-based training days, Headstart courses, InvestIN courses, apply for MOOCs, attend academic societies and lectures, enter competitions, and embark upon wider reading; in short, to look at a range of activities that will inform their decision making and enhance their CVs and Personal Statement. Such opportunities are communicated via the twice-termly Careers Bulletin, HoY and Career-based assemblies, and weekly e-mails to the year group and their tutors. Students are encouraged to record their participation and the learning that comes from these experiences on Unifrog.

Through the PSD programme across the year, there are talks delivered on various aspects of HE. Typically, these might include talks on Canadian, European and Australian Universities, Volunteering on a gap year, a presentation on making the most of an open day, creating a LinkedIn account, a presentation by the London Interdisciplinary School, and talks on Joint Honours Courses and Degree Apprenticeships. There are occasional trips organised for interested students: for example, small groups of interested students have attended apprenticeship fairs over the last four years. Additional talks take place outside of formal lesson time, depending on interest; for example, we hosted speakers from Bocconi in 2022-23, and on degrees with model-making.

At some stage during the L6th year, there will be an opportunity for all students to make use of Shortlist.me, an automated virtual interview programme, whereby students can undertake a virtual online interview and receive feedback on how they present. Whilst much of the focus of the careers programme throughout the 6th form gravitates towards university applications, this opportunity helps develop employability skills and readiness for the world of work, and directly assists students looking to apply for degree apprenticeships or work experience,

Michaelmas Term: Students are more fully enrolled in Unifrog in November, once their A level courses are up and running. An assembly is given, and students are shown how to use the various university-oriented modules to help devise shortlists.

Lent Term: In January, there is a presentation to parents and students on the University landscape and apprenticeships, usually by Paul Drinkwater of Southampton University admissions department and Sue Taylor of the ALPS partnership. In-house, students investigate model personal statements with their tutors, as a means of seeing how to develop their portfolio of relevant experiences. Students are encouraged to use Unifrog as a means to record their further educational experiences and reflections, and with an eye on writing the personal statement. Students are given guidance on how to make best use of open days (live or virtual), albeit within the parameters of school expectations that students should only seek permission to attend two open days per term.

The EC Careers independent careers advisers return to college to offer support to L6th who are making decisions on courses, careers and which university. Appointments are booked in January and February, to assist students finding it harder to narrow down their options.

Summer Term: The Epsom College Higher Education Conference and Fair is now an amalgam of virtual and in-person events across the term: There are presentations or webinars led by university advisers on writing personal statements, and an in-house session when students begin the process of completing the UCAS application online. Students are encouraged to select relevant webinars and talks from a range on offer, possibly including:

- Applying to Scottish Universities
- Oxbridge
- Apprenticeships
- Successful applications to medicine
- Applying to European universities
- Making the most of open days

Then students and parents are invited to the marquee where around 40 Universities and other providers set up their stands. We would also usually invite local maintained schools to attend the university fair, additionally inviting OEs to represent the universities alongside the reps, to present a student perspective.

The College hosts a networking evening for L6th which introduces students to the importance of networking. Students hear from various eminent OEs and parents who have enjoyed careers success, and mingle with an invited group to practise networking skills.

Upper Sixth

Through the PSD programme, there are talks delivered on student finance and mental wellbeing at university.

Michaelmas term: students are supported in house, either by HMM or tutor, in fine-tuning their university choices and personal statement. Students will usually seek the advice of one subject-specialist to review their personal statement. Advice is given on an ad hoc basis, according to need. Separately, there are workshops on applying for apprenticeships, covering how to search for, and how to succeed in applying for, apprenticeships.

Lent/summer term: advice is given on how to select offers, and firm and conditional choice information is collated, in preparation for results day.

Results day: in preparation for results day, results are discussed with HoDs, so that for every student who has missed their grades, there is immediate advice on hand: whether to request a review or marking, who to call, whether to look at Clearing, etc. There is a group of staff available that day and following, to assist and support.

OEs: for those who need to reapply, there is a workshop in September to assist and support them beginning the UCAS process again. Support is similarly offered in-house in writing/adapting their personal statements.

Specialist provision

Certain competitive fields have designated staff to oversee and guide students in their HE journeys:

American Universities

We have supported a stable number of students interested in applying to American Universities, usually in single figures, c.4-8 per year, although there has been an increase over the last three years. We employ Daniel De Witt and Daisy Hill (Banyan Educational Consulting) as specialist consultants to oversee our American applicants. Daniel oversees the programme, and Daisy acts as our 1-2-1 tutor for applicants.

An introduction: we hold an annual assembly for the U4th in the Lent term, introducing them to the concept, with a visit by American Universities laid on in the summer whenever possible. Daniel attends the A level choices evening for the 5th form and parents in the Lent term. For students considering American applications, College Day in London (in September) is advertised as an essential study visit for interested families.

Sixth Form (Year 12-13)

In September, we host an evening presentation led by Daniel and Daisy, alongside visiting reps from US Liberal Arts Colleges, for parents and students from M4th to L6th, to introduce students to the nature of an American University experience, the challenges of the process involved and the support provided. The presentation additionally addresses the journey towards winning a sport scholarship. From around half-term in the Michaelmas Term a group of students is self-identified, who are subsequently supported in their American applications. Daisy will make periodic visits to Epsom throughout the 6th form to help guide the group through the various challenges of making such an application, from choosing the college, to completing the paperwork, and writing the supplementary essays; she is also available to students in an online capacity throughout their journey. Similarly, she provides support for the staff asked to produce references. It is worth stating that, philosophically, we believe that strong parental involvement can be counter-productive for an applicant. American universities are very much interested in “the whole student”, not just the academic version of that student, and that therefore we would expect students to be liaising directly with Daisy, as opposed to parents.

From the end of 5th form, the College seeks to gauge whether there is sufficient interest for a group of L6th to undertake instruction for the SAT exams. From 2021-22, this teaching has been provided by A list on a weekday evening. The tuition ideally starts in October, with a series of two hour lessons on a weekly basis, in preparation for the March SATs. It is the candidate’s responsibility to book the test.

Apprenticeships

It is a statutory expectation that the college delivers guidance on alternative pathways, specifically the apprenticeship routes. In the U4th year, there is a presentation on apprenticeships by Sue Taylor of the ALPS Partnership. The 5th form make use of the apprenticeship tool on Unifrog when investigating work experience opportunities. In the L6th, Sue Taylor co-presents to the year group and parents alongside the Russell group university presentation (an introduction to next steps for 6th form) and there is a further presentation on degree apprenticeships in PSD, and a recap presentation during the HEC in the summer. Throughout the L6th, any opportunities to visit apprenticeship fairs are advertised; the school has run a trip to one such fair at Sandown Park since 2019. In the U6th, dependent on need, Sue Taylor runs workshops helping prepare interested students for applying for apprenticeships.

Oxbridge

From the beginning of their school career, students are given the opportunity to enrich their learning beyond the confines of classroom syllabi, through IAPs, attendance at academic societies like the Debating Society, MUN and the STEM Society, and a range of extension activities and lectures in the Cultural Hour. In the 5th form, the Oxbridge timeline is introduced to interested pupils and parents, often a trip to Oxford or Cambridge is organised, and there are further opportunities for IAPs to be undertaken over the summer vacation.

Lower Sixth (Year 12)

All students are encouraged to be ambitious throughout the year, with an eye on applying to any competitive university. The following timeline then outlines the process, overseen by Ms Hasan.

- Michaelmas: Meeting explaining expectations (excellent GCSE results) and requirements of a typical successful applicant; deadline personal statement set.
- January/February: Audit interviews for interested applicants; detailed individualised feedback making clear best estimation of chance
- February to June: Individualised tutoring, Wednesday club for Arts/Humanities students to promote academic discourse, and encouragement to engage in national competitions
- Post Summer Exams: Mock TSA/LNAT, Personal statements reviewed, College/Subject choices reviewed, Trial Interview and feedback with Oxbridge specialists, Summer Activity (reading and projects)

Upper Sixth (Year 13)

- September to December: Applications reviewed, second Mock TSA/LNAT etc; individualised tutoring and practice papers
- September to October/November: Preparation for the TSA and entrance tests and individualised interview practice
- November: Oxbridge Interview Night (practice interviews with local schools)
- November/December: Second Trial Interview and feedback with Oxbridge specialists,
- December: Survey of students to glean information and inform future provision

Law

The Law Society enables interested students to discuss legal issues (present and past) and to get to grips with the fundamental aspects of studying Law. Amongst other things, the Law Society introduces students to the English legal system (including the hierarchy of the courts, sources of law and judicial reasoning) and key substantive areas such as Contract, Criminal, Tort and EU law. The Society hosts guest speakers from the legal world and offers support to those interested in studying Law at university (including help with aptitude tests such as the LNAT and Cambridge Law Test). There is a Law Society Dinner which enables students to network with practitioners.

Medical students

In the 5th form, parents and students are invited to a talk at the A level choices evening, and to a further more extensive presentation in March that outlines the provision for students through their 6th form career.

Lower Sixth (Year 12)

The Head of Medical Applications meets students interested in Vet, Medicine and Dentistry early in the Michaelmas Term, and encourages enrolment in the UCAT support and the Medical Society. Students might also opt into additional Biology and Chemistry activities. The Medical Society is student led, and involves experiences like dissections, student presentations and visiting speakers. The Head of Medical Applications (Mr Tom Adams) is responsible for monitoring work experience and help with finding relevant work experience. Throughout the L6th they are reminded of the need for work experience and given advice on the type of work experience they should aim to organise. By the end of the summer term, students should have submitted a first draft of their personal statement for review. The UCAT test should be undertaken over the summer vacation.

Upper Sixth (Year 13)

In the aftermath of the UCAT results, students discuss their results and finalise their university choices with the Head of Medical Applications. Final preparation for the BMAT, practice interviews, and a MMI mock evening are all offered.

Further notes on applying:

There are two admissions tests for studying medicine in the UK. The majority of medical schools require one of either test.

The **University Clinical Aptitude Test** (UCAT) is a two hour computer-based assessment used by the majority of medical schools. There are typically four subtests with a maximum score of 900 per test. Average national scores tend to be in the region of 2500. Students get their results on the day which can therefore inform their university choices. The **BioMedical Admissions Test** (BMAT) is a two-hour paper and pen test assessing aptitude skills, data analysis, scientific knowledge as well as the capacity to consider different propositions and communicate them effectively in the form of an essay. This assessment takes place after applications have been made.

The vast majority of medical schools have some form of admissions interview. These broadly fall into three categories:

- **Oxbridge:** Oxford and Cambridge colleges hold interviews which assess a variety of attributes but are primarily focused at subject knowledge, academic ability and curiosity. There are usually two interviews lasting 20 minutes each.
- **Panel:** This involves 3-4 members of a panel enquiring about the range of attributes mentioned above. Academic ability is rarely assessed. Typically 10-20 minutes.
- **Multiple-mini Interviews:** 5-10 of stations, each lasting 3-7 minutes, each on a different topic or attribute. Students may be required to engage with an actor in scenarios. Manual dexterity may also be assessed.