

## Year 13 Careers and Destinations Update for Parents and Carers – March 2024

It is a very busy time for Year 13 at the moment, and we know that the same goes for those who are supporting them at home as well. I hope that this guide will give you some up to date information and helpful resources, for whatever stage you feel your child is at in their journey.

I've split this guide into sections, hoping to cover most eventualities – this means that you only need to read the section that applies to your child (which may be more than one), but that you can also refer back to this if your child changes their mind later. As always, I am available for students to make appointments as well.

At the start of this term, I surveyed all of Year 13 to find out what their current plans are – this was to help me to identify students who might benefit from different activities, and also to help me to identify students who are still unsure and might need some more personalised guidance. If their situation changes and they feel their needs may have changed, please ask them to email me.

### **For students applying for university:**

Congratulations to those students who met the equal consideration deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> January.

**NB. Students can still apply – there are thousands of spaces left on courses across the country.**

Thank you for supporting your child through the process of choosing the courses they applied for – I know that it was a very considered process for a lot of you and that for some of you it involved travelling quite a distance to open days. This is a map of the universities that students have told me that they have visited and it turns out that Wrotham covered quite a few miles this year! I'm sure there are more and I haven't even included the family who visited the USA to look at prospective universities! Thank you all for this vital support. Open days are still being held over March if you feel it would help your child to make their final decisions. [www.opendays.com](http://www.opendays.com) has a full calendar.

Please also remember that students in receipt of the 16-19 bursary can claim travel expenses (with evidence) through the portal if they haven't already.

### **What happens next?**

Student finance applications are probably highest on students' lists at the moment. We had Canterbury Christ Church University come to deliver a talk to all of our UCAS applicants in February to explain the



process and answer specific questions, and I know that this relieved a lot of anxiety for some students. To support you further:

- Student finance change the date that applications open every year. They offer the option to sign up for a notification here so students know when to apply: <https://studentfinance.campaign.gov.uk/>
- Student finance also offer a guide with FAQ here: <https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/student-finance/understanding-undergraduate-student-loans>
- Martin Lewis has an independent myth-busting guide here: <https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/students/student-loans-england-plan-5/>
- Information about extra financial support for students with learning difficulties or disabilities can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowance-dsa>
- Students can also apply for bursaries or scholarships (money that doesn't need to be paid back). We recommend looking at individual university websites, but also The Scholarship Hub, which has a parents' page: <https://www.thescholarshiphub.org.uk/>

The other consideration is for those who have yet to decide on their final courses once they've received all of their offers. There is a very good guide here: <https://www.theuniguide.co.uk/advice/ucas-application/the-smart-way-to-choosing-your-first-and-insurance-choices>

### **For students searching and applying for apprenticeships or direct employment:**

Throughout their time in the sixth form, your child has had lots of opportunities to learn more about apprenticeships, and most of this has also been relevant to those looking for direct employment since the application process is more like applying for a job than applying for a university or college course. This means that vacancies can appear at any time, and recruitment processes can vary hugely.

A lot of apprenticeships and school leaver vacancies are opening up now, and will continue to do so up to the Summer, but if an application opens, they really need to jump on it since the employer always has the right to close a vacancy early if it's popular. The key is taking time to research opportunities and sign up for notifications either on any 'register interest' opportunities on employer websites, on the UCAS Hub, or on the government's 'Find an Apprenticeship' website.

Students who are actively looking for apprenticeships were encouraged to sign up for the online Apprenticeship Academy – the February/March cohort has already started and those students are making great progress with the opportunity for support from their level 6 careers advisor and insights from current apprentices and a range of employers.

Last term, we had CXK and ASK come to work with a group of 17 students who are interested in either apprenticeships or school leaver roles. They joined a workshop about CVs and how to use them, as well as a mock assessment centre with personalised advice – feedback from the students has been very positive. ASK also presented to everyone in Year 12 and 13 with some key facts and information about apprenticeships and how to apply on the same day.

As with all opportunities, most were optional for students, so if your child didn't sign up for any of these, but would still like support, I am here to help them – please get in touch.

The parent/carer section of our careers website has lots of information about apprenticeships, including how to find them. Helpful links are here: <https://www.wrothamschool.com/careers/advice-for-parents/> and here: <https://www.wrothamschool.com/careers/apprenticeships/>

I also highly recommend that they come to our careers fair (Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March) armed with paper copies of their CV because I know that some of the employers have open vacancies. The full list of exhibitors is here: [https://www.wrothamschool.com/careers\\_events/careers-fair-2024/](https://www.wrothamschool.com/careers_events/careers-fair-2024/)



### **For students applying for college or higher technical qualifications:**

There are opportunities for those who wish to study at a higher level than sixth form, but not go to university. These are level 4 and 5 qualifications, usually at local colleges. These are usually a year long, highly specialised courses, and they are usually fully funded for that year if the student is under 19 when they start. If your child is in this situation (and hasn't already applied), then I recommend that they look at the courses available at local providers and apply soon.

College placements are also available for those who wish to study level 2-3 in something vocational (e.g. carpentry or plumbing) or to boost UCAS points, but please check the funding situation with the college – if the course is longer than a year then they might have to contribute costs towards the second and/or third year. Most colleges are aware of this and will have options (e.g. fast-track courses) for 18 year olds – it's worth speaking to them directly.

### **For students who are unsure about what they want to do next:**

As I said above, the recent survey has given me a list of students who I will be making appointments with for guidance – in fact, I have already been working closely with some of these young people. All of the research, however, says that young people are far more likely to be influenced by their families than any

other people in their lives. This is why I am grateful that so many parents and carers of our students are open to working with the school so that they are getting support from every angle.

The most important piece of advice is for them not to panic – they are not in a race with everyone else. It's easy to see how they might feel that pressure, since all of their career decisions so far have been made at specific ages due to the way the education system is structured in the UK. 'What will you do when you leave school?' is a question that often feels like it's literally asking what they'll be doing after 28<sup>th</sup> June, their official last day of education. When I tell them what any adult knows (that now, they can make decisions when they need to as an individual), it seems like a revelation to most young people!

If you would like some advice about how to have these conversations, then (again) the parent/carer section of the Wrotham School careers website has links to resources (including email newsletters, magazines, websites and podcasts) that can support you in having these discussions – even if you know your child isn't ready to have that conversation right now.

<https://www.wrothamschool.com/careers/advice-for-parents/>

Thank you – as always – for your continuing support.

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