Applying to University

Applying for university can be stressful, but planning ahead and starting early can greatly reduce this. This guide outlines the expectations that the college has of your son/daughter, what they can expect from us, and how you can best support them through this process.

Our Expectations

- **Experience!** We expect all students to attend at least 3 open days to support them with choosing the best universities for them. Open Days tend to begin in the summer term and college absences for Open Days can be authorised by providing proof of booking. Visit www.opendays.com for full listings
- **Research!** All students should begin to research their options now. They should look at both university options and course information thoroughly. This should include:-
    - Creating a 'wish list' of aspects students want from a university to help them to sift through their options
    - Completing a shortlist on Unifrog and submitting this to their tutors
    - Researching compulsory modules for all of their chosen courses and making notes on each
- **Consider!** Students should also consider alternatives to university and keep an open mind about different progression routes. In many sectors, apprenticeships are a genuine alternative to university and offer great prospects for career progression. However, they can be very competitive and the application process must be taken seriously – they are not the easy option!
- **Ask!** We strongly recommend that students seek advice before the summer as this gives them time over the holidays for the decision making process. Students can get support from their Senior Tutor or can book an appointment with a member of the Careers team. Many students leave this until they come back in September, which adds a lot of stress to the application process
- **Respect!** Deadlines matter. All students should complete their first draft of their Personal Statement before they break up for the summer and should continue to work on this over the holidays. Internal application deadlines must be adhered to. The college completes a comprehensive quality checking process for every one of the 700 or so applications. This takes place after a student submits their application to the UCAS portal. This takes time, and so missing internal deadlines increases the chance that an application will be delayed.

What Students can Expect from Us

- Time and support in tutorials to complete the UCAS application. Senior Tutors will take your son/daughter through this process step by step
- Opportunities for feedback on Personal Statements. We will arrange for a number of university drop ins through September and October within the Careers area. Students can use these to get a second opinion on their statements. However, students should remember that Personal Statements are exactly that – personal!
- Well written and supportive references that include statements from all teachers about performance within all subjects and units
- Advice and guidance about university courses and institutions
- Thorough quality check of all applications to make sure there are no mistakes. All applications submitted before the internal deadline will be sent off within 10 working days

How can you help?

- Take part in the conversation – it is really important that you are part of this conversation and so we actively encourage all parents/carers to have regular discussions with their son or daughters about their aims and ambitions and where they are up to with their application
- If at all possible, go with your son/daughter to university open days. This will make sure that you are getting the same information around choices and courses which will help you to support your sons/daughters to make their final decisions
- Ask for help! If there is anything that you don't understand about the university application process, or that you would like to know more about, please do not hesitate to contact the college. It may also be helpful to look at the following resources
    - www.ucas.com/undergraduate/applying-university/ucas-undergraduate-advice-parents-and-guardians
    - https://www.asfc.ac.uk/about-us/parents-and-carers
    - www.unifrog.com Parents can log in too! Simply use – "asfcparents" as the formcode