

SIXTH FORM

UCAS Year 13

We are thrilled to hear that so many of our Year 13 students are getting UCAS Offers in from their chosen universities within forty eight hours of sending off their applications. Some course providers invite you to an interview or audition – some don't and a number of our sixth form students are being invited to attend an interview. Students have had in house training on interview techniques. We would also like to keep parents informed on how to succeed at interview and we have therefore outlined the key points below:

Why do courses interview

- This varies across different subjects and universities and colleges
- Often its creative, competitive or care-related courses that have an invitation process
- Interviews and auditions help Admissions Tutors to compare applicants before deciding what offers to make
- Seeing you in person is an ideal way for them to find out if you'd be a good fit for the course

Courses which Interview

There are three main reasons for candidates being called for an interview:

- Courses which are work related eg Medicine, Teaching
- Courses which require a specific skill set eg Art/Design/Performing Arts/Photography
- Courses which have a very high demand eg Law/psychology/Business Studies

Three main types of interview

- Audition
- Group
- Individual

You can contact your Admissions Tutor to find out which type of interview you are attending if your letter does not state this.

How it works

It could be an interview or audition, or you might be asked to provide examples of your work – maybe a portfolio or an essay.

If they do send you an invitation they might contact you direct, but more likely it will show on your UCAS Track – here you can accept, decline or ask to change the date or time.

But if not, just select that you're asking for a different one in Track and get in touch with the university/college and when you've figured out the details they'll either update the invitation in Track or contact you separately to let you know.

Then after you've attended they'll make a decision and amend Track. Once you have received all decisions you can make your replies.

Interview Tips!

Below is general advice and guidance from current Admissions Tutors on what they are looking for from their candidates. Whilst these points are a good foundation in a student's preparation, we would recommend that

they carry out additional research into the particular area/profession for which they are being interviewed together with being fully prepared:

- Good communication skills
- Passion and enthusiasm for their intended subject
- Knowledge of chosen course and university
- Someone who can work independently and consider new ideas
- What is the candidate enjoying in their current studies
- Extra curricular research/wider reading
- Personality behind the application
- Preparation for questions from the candidate to the interview panel

Plan ahead

- **Check where and when** - sort out any travel and accommodation you need – check the university website for maps and directions
- **Be ready for questions** – some about your application, as well as your change to ask about the course and the university/college
- **Know your stuff** – show you know the latest in your subject area, and keep up to date with the news, they might ask to hear your views
- **Practise** – have mock interviews with a teacher/adviser – cover why you chose the course and what you enjoy most about your current studies
- **And sleep well!**

The Interview

- **Dress smartly** – you might need a suit, but smart trousers and shirt/blouse will show you are taking it seriously
- **Get there early** – and have their contact details handy so you can let them know just in case you are delayed
- **Good body language** – don't slouch, yawn or fold your arms – stay calm and alert, sit up straight and make eye contact
- **Don't worry if you don't understand** – ask them to repeat or rephrase the question, make a good guess, or relate it to something you know better
- **Expect the unexpected** – they might do a surprise test to see how you react under pressure – just do your best
- **And ask them questions too** – this shows enthusiasms and gives you chance to get answers you haven't found out yet

Afterwards

- **Make notes** – if you have more interviews coming up, it might be handy preparation to write down the questions and answers you've already had
- **Reflect on how you did** – decide what worked well and think of new answers for areas you want to improve in
- **Then sit back and wait** – once UCAS have heard from the university/college they'll let you know by amending Track (if they are making you an offer)

Remember throughout the entire process, Admissions Tutors will be looking for a variety of skills which they feel will benefit any student wishing to study at degree level. Below is a list of those that are commonly looked for:

- Communication
- Group work
- Ability to follow instructions
- Time Management
- Problem solving
- Understanding and correctly interpreting questions
- Negotiation skills

REMEMBER

You have got your application in early and so you are already in a favourable position. Admissions Tutors will already be viewing you as organised and focused so do your research and shine.

UCAS – Dates you need to know

15 January 18:00 (UK time)	Equal consideration deadline for applications to all courses except those listed in the UCAS search tool, search ucas.com with a 15 October or 24 March deadline
25 February	Extra opens
24 March 14:00 (UK time)	Equal consideration deadline for applications to art and design courses, except those listed with a 15 January deadline. Applications received after the above deadlines will still be forwarded to universities, but they are not obliged to consider them
30 June 18:00 (UK time)	Late date for receipt of application with up to five choices. Applications received later are automatically entered into Clearing and the applicants need to contact the universities direct to be considered for a course
4 July 18:00 (UK time)	Extra closes
17 August	A level, GCE and Advanced Diploma results are published and full Clearing vacancy information service starts
20 September 18:00 (UK time)	Last receipt of applications through Apply

UCAS – Top Tip for Parents

For more information about higher education and supporting your son or daughter on their next steps, sign up for the free monthly parent newsletter at www.ucas.com/parentform

UCAS – Reply deadlines

Everyone's reply deadline is different. Your individual date will appear in Track – but be sure to meet it or your offers will be declined.

If the date of your final decision is before:	Your must reply in Track by:
31 March 2017	4 May 2017
5 May 2017	8 June 2017
8 June 2017	22 June 2017
13 July 2017	20 July 2017

Reply to all your offers using Track at www.ucas.com/track. Find out more about replying at www.ucas.com/replies.

UCAS – Extra 2017

If all your decisions are in and you did not get any offers – or you want to decline those you have – you can apply to more choices for free with Extra.

Extra open on 25 February 2017 and closes on 4 July. Find out more at www.ucas.com/extra

Student Finance

It is the student's responsibility to organise their own student finance and it is advisable that they do this as soon as possible. Student Finance generally opens after Christmas so students need to keep their eye on this. Below is some useful information:

General information: www.sfengland.slc.co.uk Helpline: 0845 300 5090

Online application and fee calculator: www.gov.uk/student-finance-calculator

National Association of Student Money Advisors: www.nasma.org.uk

Bursaries and Scholarships: www.direct.gov.uk/bursarymap or www.ucas.com

NHS and Social Work Bursaries: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students

Year 12 - PSHE Sessions

Mrs Warner has coordinated two events:

CV and Letter of Application

On 1st March 2016 we will be hosting a CV and Letter of Application session. The students will be expected to bring with them a proposed letter of application and CV (students will have received details of preparation and examples in their PSHE)

Mock Interviews

On the 15th March and 12th April 2016 will be hosting general interviews, companies signed up so far are (DHL, STEM Ambassadors, South Northants Homes). The letter of application and CV prepared will be used to conduct the interview. Appropriate dress wear is expected. Further details will be given in January.

Reminder

Year 11 - Into Sixth Form Open Evening

On Thursday 26th January 2016 we will be hosting our 'Into The Sixth Form Evening'. This evening will start at 6.30 pm in the Main School Hall with an introductory talk covering what our sixth has to offer and how to apply. Year 11 parents and prospective pupils will then be able to visit all curriculum areas and see the range of subjects on offer. We have given assemblies to Year 11 students on the application process and handed out letters of invitation regarding the event. Please contact jfreer@sponne.org.uk should you not have received a letter. We will be giving a presentation again to the Year 11 student's week beginning 13th January so that they are fully informed on how to get the most from the evening.

Prize Giving

On Friday 9th December we held our Prize Giving Evening in the Main School Hall. It is a pleasure to celebrate the successes of our Sixth Form students past and present and it was lovely to see last Year 13 students at the event and catch up with their news on University life.

Sutton Trust Summer Schools 2016

The Sutton Trust Summer Schools are free, subject-specific residential courses for Year 12 students from UK state-maintained schools. The summer schools give academically-able students from non-privileged homes

the opportunity to experience life at a leading university and to gain an insight into what it is like to live and study as a first-year undergraduate student. The Summer schools balance busy academic days with enjoyable social activities as well as provide attendees with the opportunity to meet current staff and students.

The aim is to demystify elite universities and to equip students – most of whom will be the first in their families to go on to higher education – with the knowledge and insight to make high quality applications to top universities.

In 2017, the Sutton Trust will provide this fantastic opportunity to 2000 students. The summer schools are taking place at the following universities:

- The University of Bristol
- The University of Cambridge
- Durham University
- The University of Edinburgh
- Imperial College London
- King's College London
- The University of Nottingham
- Royal Veterinary College
- University of St Andrews
- University College London
- The University of Warwick

“Before this summer school I wasn't sure about university and didn't know if it was for me. But, after this week, I know that I WILL be attending university.”

Applications process will open at 12:00 pm on the 8th January 2016. Student application process deadline is 5:00 pm on 11th March 2016. Students will be notified by 6th May 2016 if they have been successful in gaining a place on the Summer School programme.

Sutton Trust US Programme 2017: applications now open!

This programme helps British states school students apply to American universities through support, advice and a one-week summer school in the US. They have over 200 programme alumni attending US institutions, accessing \$50 million in funding.

After four successful years, the Sutton Trust is continuing its flagship US programme to give bright, state school students a taste of life at an American university.

The programme, delivered in partnership with the US-UK Fulbright Commission, is centred on a one week summer school in the US (in previous years at either Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Yale University or Harvard) with introductory events and application support in the UK before and after. Successful students will take part in a unique opportunity to get a taste of US culture and higher education first hand. This is a life-changing experience.

The programme provides participants with a wide range of activities to help them make the right decisions about American higher education.

The Sutton Trust covers all programme costs, including residential events, accommodation and travel.

To apply follow the link <https://app.wizehive.com/appform/login/sutton2017>

Student Application Form deadline: 11:59pm, Sunday, 22nd January 2017

School Reference Form deadline: 11:59pm, Tuesday, 24th January 2017

UNIQ SUMMER SCHOOLS – OXFORD UNIVERSITY

Applications for Oxford University's Summer School programme will open on 8th December 2016 at 1:00 pm and close at 5:00 pm on 3rd February 2017. The deadline is absolute and they do not accept any late applications for any reason (including technical reasons).

Year 12 students in UK state schools and colleges are invited to apply via the online application form at www.uniq.ox.ac.uk. The programme is free of charge to all participants and is aimed at students who have done well in their GCSE's, particularly those attending schools with little history of application of Oxford. Full details can be found on the Oxford University website www.ox.ac.uk

Volunteering matters

Stand out from the Crowd with CSV (Community Service Volunteers)

.... experience skills gained from volunteering with CSV and help improve your job prospects

Are you 16-35?

Are you looking for practical experience and employability skills to give you a competitive edge in the job market?

Do you want to enhance your CV or university application?

Are you interested in developing personal and life skills?

Do you want to make a real difference to people and communities?

CSV can help you 'Stand Out From the Crowd' through Full Time Volunteering

- Full Time Volunteering placements for 4-12 months
- Hundreds of opportunities away from home across the UK
- FREE accommodation and money to live on
- Support from CSV

Call: 0800 374 991

Visit: www.csv.org.uk/standout

Email: volunteer@csv.org.uk

UCAS Year 12

It is never too early to start looking at future options in Year 12. Many universities run taster courses on some subject for Year 12 students and details of these can be found on the UCAS website showing details of all these opportunities.

Connexions Interviews

We are currently arranging careers advice and guidance for Year 13 students not wishing to go on into Higher Education. Any student who requires a Connexions interview should make the 6th form team aware. Useful email addresses for jobs and apprenticeships www.apprenticeships.org.uk www.jobs4you2.org.uk and www.connexions-direct.com

We are constantly striving to ensure that we give students and their parents, the best possible Sixth Form experience. If there is information that you would like to see in forthcoming newsletters or on the Post 16 area of our school website/FROG pages please do not hesitate to contact us SponneSixthForm@sponne.org.uk

Year 12 Assembly

On Thursday 5th December Year 12 received an assembly from NATIONAL CITIZEN SERVICE (NCS).

What is NCS?

It is a voluntary programme for young people in year 11 and Sixth form, which focuses on their personal and social development and includes challenging activities, away-from-home residential experiences and self-designed social action projects that will benefit their local communities.

Why take part in NCS?

NCS is a fantastic opportunity for young people to enhance confidence, build new friendships improve career prospects and to build a connection with their community.

It is a government funded and supported programme and the cost contribution for students, including the residential elements structured learning activities and transport is just £35 per young person. The actual cost of the Spring and Summer programmes is in excess of £1000 per student, so we are very fortunate to be provided with such generous funding.

We are currently processing applications for the Spring half term programme which is a condensed version of our Summer programme. This will include 4 day residential at an activity centre (transport provided) and 3 days non-residential focused on life skills and team building. This will also include the planning of the final phase which is all about completing a Social Action Project in their local community. NCS Expression of Interest Form's can be collected from Mrs Freer in the 6th Form Study Area.

To guarantee your place on the NCS programme today please sign up online by visiting www.ncsem1.org.uk

Say yes and you'll:

- Take on new challenges and learn new skills
- Make a difference while making new friends
- Grow your confidence and your CV
- Experience something new as you help out your community
- Graduate with a certificate signed by the Prime Minister



University Taster Course Programme – for University taster courses for prospective undergraduate students

Choose from over a hundred courses in multiple subject areas at numerous universities in and around London

The university Taster Course Programme provides Year 12 Sixth Form students with attest of what life at a university in London is like. Through your chosen taster course you will experience the different teaching methods used by university academics and gain an insight into the additional facilities available, whilst meeting students from across the UK.

All taster courses are free to attend and you can choose a course from a variety of subjects taking place at the numerous participating universities. The following universities have participated in the University Taster Course Programme, along with The Careers Group, University of London:

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- Birkbeck, University of London*
- BPP University College
- Brunel University
- The Careers Group, University of London*
- City University London
- Courtauld Institute of Art*
- Goldsmiths, University of London*
- Heythrop College, University of London*
- Imperial College London
- King's College London*
- London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)*
- London Metropolitan University
- London South Bank University
- Pearson College London
- Queen Mary, University of London*
- The Royal Central School of Speech & Drama*
- Royal Holloway, University of London*
- Royal Veterinary College*
- St George's, University of London*
- SOAS, University of London*
- UCL*
- University of East London
- University of Greenwich
- University of London Institute in Paris*
- University of West London
- University of Westminster

Courses range from voice and drama to medicine and nursing, to computing and business.

All taster courses can be found on the website <http://www.london.ac.uk/tasters>.

You will be able to apply to the 2017 taster courses from 11:00 am on Thursday 5th January 2017 the website www.london.ac.uk/tasters will open applications to the full schedule of taster courses for 2017.

IMPORTANT: Please note that you do not need to rush to apply as soon as applications open at 11:00 am on Thursday 5th January 2017 as they are giving everyone until 11:00 am on Wednesday 11th January 2017 to initially apply. At 11:00 am on Wednesday 11th January 2017, if they have received more applications than places for a taster course, they will allocate the places using the random selection. If the taster course is not full, then places will be offered on a first-come first-served basis in the usual way. You will be notified of the outcome of your application by email within 5 working days after 11:00 am on Wednesday 11th January 2017.

Applications will remain open after 11:00 am on Wednesday 11th January 2017 for all taster courses with places still available. Places on these taster courses will be offered on a first-come first-served basis unless specified otherwise in the particular taster course listing.

Mock Examinations

As you will be aware from communications prior to the Christmas break our big academic event for this half-term will be the mock examinations. Year 12 & 13 have their examinations in the week beginning January 11th and in the week beginning January 18th for one day only. I hope that all students were able to get down to some serious revision over the Christmas break. These examinations are a very reliable method for consolidating knowledge from the first term and also scrutinising the competency of examination technique. Personally, revision should always consist of four parts: firstly, putting together a set of notes that make sense to the individual producing them which are based around the key questions that could/should come up in the examination; secondly, learning this information; thirdly, testing yourself on this information and finally, testing yourself on this information under examination conditions and timings. If a student can loosely stick to this methodology they are giving themselves a good chance of success. The results for the mocks for both year groups will be released before the February half-term.