
Policy: Careers and Higher Education

1. Key objectives

- 1.1. CEIAG (Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance) gives students at West Buckland support in different areas to help them make informed choices about their futures:
 - a) Careers education – a planned programme (experiences within the curriculum and outside school) that helps them gain the knowledge and develop skills for planning and managing their careers.
 - b) Information about the range of opportunities and options available at key transition point in a students' education.
 - c) Advice – help for individuals to enable them to review, plan and manage their learning and progression to the next stage.
 - d) Guidance – help from specialist advisers with knowledge of opportunities and the pathways to and through them, so they can identify their long-term goals and plan steps to attain them.
- 1.2. As such, the Careers and Higher Education Department at West Buckland School aims to:
 - a) Enable individuals to become effective planners and managers of their own careers in a rapidly changing world of learning and work so they can function properly as adult citizens.
 - b) Provide opportunities for students to understand themselves, and develop their capabilities by assessing their own needs, strengths and weaknesses, employability skills, interests and qualities. This might be encouraging students to engage with wider society (including the UK).
 - c) Provide accurate, impartial and up to date information relating to the world of work and learning, including local, national and international opportunities which avoid stereotypes such as those defined by gender.
 - d) Help students develop the skills and confidence to make realistic and informed decisions about a broad range of future options and to manage the transitions from one stage of their education to the next.
 - e) Raise aspirations, increase motivation and, consequently, raise achievement by encouraging students to fulfil their potential.
 - f) Actively promote tolerance and mutual respect for people from different social, cultural, career and educational backgrounds.

2. Key principles

- 2.1. Whilst developing a programme which attempts to meet the objectives set out above, a number of key documents and pieces of legislation have been consulted in order to evaluate the department's provision and its effectiveness. The auditing of these characteristics, using these documents, enabled the department to develop some of the programme set out later in this policy. Key documents include:
 - a) The 'ACEG (Association for Careers Education and Guidance) Framework for careers and work-related education' April 2012.
 - b) The 'Careers Education Framework 7-19'.

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- c) 'Careers Education and Guidance in England – A National Framework 11-19' (DfES, 2003).
 - d) 'The Education Act' 2011.
 - e) 'The Gatsby Report' 2013.
 - f) The OFSTED report 'Going in the right direction? Careers guidance in schools' 2012.
 - g) 'Careers guidance and inspiration in schools' April 2014, March 2015 and January 2018 (DofE).
- 2.2. The latter is the most up to date guidance published by the Department for Education. The more recent version builds upon its predecessor but is more focused on schools helping students to overcome challenges so that they leave school prepared for life in modern Britain. In helping this preparation for British society, schools should be "developing in every young person the values, skills and behaviours they need to get on in life. All children should receive a rich provision of classroom and extra-curricular activities that develop a range of character attributes, such as resilience and grit, which underpin success in education and employment." The features of high quality careers provision that the department is striving to achieve include:
- a) Allow and encourage pupils to tackle real life challenges.
 - b) Provision of a range of activities that inspire young people.
 - c) Real life contacts with the world of work and higher education.
 - d) Inspirational role models, including alumni, from the careers to which they aspire.
 - e) Independent and face to face careers advice and guidance.
 - f) Access to advice on options available at key transition points in a young person's education.
 - g) Promote a range of career choices in a variety of areas.
 - h) The prevention of stereotyping in higher education courses and careers.
 - i) Development of entrepreneurial skills.
 - j) Develop basic career management skills like CV writing and interview skills.
 - k) Use of the National Careers Service, UCAS, Fast Tomato and a range of other appropriate information.
 - l) Awareness of other opportunities that could help them with their career aspirations, such as the National Citizen Service and other voluntary and community activities.
 - m) The success of the provision should be linked to outcomes for students; destination data is compiled as far as is possible.

3. The Department

- 3.1. The Head of Sixth Form, along with the Careers Co-ordinator, is responsible for the leadership and management of the department and the co-ordination of CEIAG. As well as any other responsibilities in the school, careers lessons in Year 11 and enrichment lessons in the 6th form are part of the timetable commitment. Support is provided by assistant teachers who teach Year 11 careers and 6th form enrichment lessons. There are, however, a wide range of people within the school for whom careers forms part of their remit, and a number of external organizations who provide services, whether regularly or on an ad-hoc

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basis. These include public and private institutions such as universities, Careers South West, local employers, professional organizations and the three armed forces.

Resources and information

- 3.2. The department is situated in the library and is open throughout the school day. It offers a range of appropriate books, magazines, leaflets and information packs as well as multiple PCs which provide access to VLE and internet based materials. The Head of Sixth Form has an office which is adjacent to the library. Students are shown and reminded of the information available.
- 3.3. As well as the library, information and advice beyond the classroom includes:
- a) Fast Tomato, which a web based system which provides careers information, helps build CVs and provides an online place for students to record information.
 - b) Websites including Plotr, UCAS and the National Careers Service.
 - c) Careers lunches where alumni and employers provide information and advice.
 - d) Newsletters, which are sent to students and staff as well as parents.
 - e) Careers and HE days in June of Year 12 and September of Year 13.
 - f) Electronic messages to students via e-mail or VLE on opportunities as they come up.
 - g) Organised university open days visits for Year 11 and 12 students.
 - h) Talks by visiting speakers, such as Sporting Elite USA, on scholarship and other opportunities.

Parental contact

- 3.4. Contact with parents is maintained in a variety of ways, including:
- a) A newsletter containing news, information and opportunities.
 - b) Letters from the department giving advice and information about vital issues such as careers interviews, student finance and higher education choices.
 - c) Presence at parents evenings from Year 8-13 as well as the 6th form open evening.
 - d) A presentation to Year 12 parents in June on university applications, student finance and other post-18 pathways.
 - e) Response to ad-hoc requests for advice and information, including appointments in school.

4. CEIAG in the curriculum**Key stage 3**

- 4.1. In Year 8, several lessons in the enrichment programme are allocated for careers based learning and are prepared by the Careers Co-ordinator but delivered by tutors. The students assess their own skills, strengths and qualities as they are introduced to the concept of employability. They learn about job families and ways in which stereotypes exist about different employment sectors.
- 4.2. In Year 9, several lessons in the enrichment programme are allocated for careers based learning. The focus is on GCSE options using Fast Tomato and the local and national labour

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markets. Different jobs are then researched using websites such as the National Careers Service, followed by university courses, using the UCAS site, and the GCSE and A-level requirements. Any individual careers guidance during Key Stage 3 is led by the tutors, but referrals to the Careers Co-ordinator are welcome and can be easily arranged.

Key stage 4

- 4.3. In Year 10 students are asked to formally record any post-16 and 18 plans and to discuss these with their tutors. They complete surveys on Fast Tomato which help them to explore themselves and begin to record information that might be included in a later CV or action plan. In Year 11, the students are timetabled for one careers lesson per week throughout the year. The learning progresses from what was experienced at the end of Year 10 with a focus on individual action plans, where/how to find out information and different types of qualifications and career paths. The lessons are delivered by the Head of Sixth Form, Careers Co-ordinator and two assistant careers teachers. In weeks 2-6 of the Autumn Term, the Head of Sixth Form and Careers Co-ordinator interview every Year 11 student and provides face to face guidance for up to 30 minutes. Fast Tomato is used to record the discussion and develop the action plan. Tutors also play a key role in updating their knowledge of their tutees' future intentions.
- 4.4. During the careers lessons, the students then learn about their future options, the changing labour market, employability skills, writing a CV and job application letters and how to conduct themselves in an interview. Usually, representatives from Barclays Lifeskills and the National Citizen Service help to deliver some of this programme.
- 4.5. In the March of Year 11, local employers (often parents or alumni) are invited into school to interview the students and provide advice about relevant careers. These are 30 minute interviews with two interviewers in which the students' CVs and letters are assessed as well as their demeanour and approach. The students then reflect on the written feedback they receive and adapt their CVs and letters accordingly and update their ideas on Fast Tomato.

Sixth form

- 4.6. In both Year 12 and 13, the tutors are key players in the advice given to the students, particularly in the application process and reference writing for HE courses and/or employment. That said, the Head of Sixth Form is a continual presence and is willing and able to offer one to one advice and guidance where needed.
- 4.7. Sixth Form students are regular attendees at careers lunches, the Medical Society and open days to universities (also open to Year 11s – see section 7). Careers and HE learning is delivered by the Head of Sixth Form as part of the enrichment programme. In both year groups, the students are given the chance to update the CVs they constructed in Year 11. After Christmas in Year 12, through to June, there is an emphasis on the variety of education, training and career paths both in the UK and abroad. A visit to the UCAS exhibition is organized in March and there is an annual HE/careers day every June in which speakers from universities, including alumni, provide information to the students.

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- 4.8. The tutors, by this stage, will have had regular conversations with their tutees about their post-18 plans and will provide such information to the Head of Sixth Form. This information can sometimes be used to inform planning for future speakers. Indeed, in Year 13 a further HE/careers day takes place in September each year and the emphasis is on researching and applying for employment or HE courses. Enrichment lessons are also given over for this purpose and include advice on personal statements, completing the UCAS form, choosing universities, student finance, life at university and confirmation/clearing procedures.
- 4.9. In the Autumn Term of Year 13, a series of mock interviews are provided for those students who are applying to competitive courses where interviews are required such as Oxbridge and Medicine. In addition, talks and interviews with careers staff of all three armed forces are organized for students who are interested and consultants offer advice on overseas universities applications. These last two opportunities are also available to Year 11 and 12 students.

5. Alumni

- 5.1. A number of students at West Buckland may not succeed in gaining a place whilst they are at school. They may then choose to apply again the following year or even after that. Others may choose to apply for the first time after they have left school, while a small group may opt for employment. The guiding principle is that the school is happy to provide references (see section 8 below), particularly in the first two years after leaving.
- 5.2. The school keeps detailed individual destination data for Year 13 leavers and, increasingly, for students who leave in Year 11 and 12. The OWBA office holds more up to date data about destinations which covers alumni who changed paths after they left school.
- 5.3. Alumni are contacted each year by the OWBA/Foundation office in school to invite them to come back to school as part of the careers lunch programme. This runs throughout the school year and is open to students in all year groups, although in reality those from Years 11-13 attend more often. On a number of Fridays, informal conversations over lunch take place with one or more alumni or other visitor. These conversations often involve career paths, qualifications and experiences in different employment sectors.
- 5.4. Alumni are occasionally invited to give a more formal presentation about their experiences of higher education or employment. These might take place in enrichment lessons or form part of the higher education/careers days in the 6th form.

6. Work experience

- 6.1. Many parents arrange work experience for their children through their own or family contacts. Where this is not possible, school contacts can help the students make contact with appropriate organisations.
- 6.2. Most work experience will last for one working week (five days) and the students will be responsible for arranging their own transport. There is no set week, but it should be arranged so that no exams, school commitments or academic lessons are missed. For any student leaving the school, the placement must be completed by the end of July.

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7. Higher Education applications

- 7.1. Section 4 covers the ways in which this topic is covered in the curriculum, particularly in the 6th form. The universities begin to hold their pre-application open days. in June/July and then September/October. Parents and students are advised that whilst it is important to visit universities and colleges which are of genuine interest to, care will be needed not to miss too many lessons, particularly on the same days. Under the auspices of the Aldiss Society, the school organises three trips for students to Bath, Bristol and Oxford universities.
- 7.2. The students are responsible for compiling their own personal statements and are given advice by tutors and during enrichment lessons. Those who are aiming for the 15th October UCAS deadline (Oxbridge, medicine, etc) start to plan their personal statement in the June of Year 12 and should try to complete it by 1st October. Most other students start work on theirs in September and should aim to complete their applications by 1st December. Some students apply outside of the UCAS system and deadlines are variable.
- 7.3. Students and their parents are given advice about how to respond to their offers and when and how to apply for student finance. This happens in early January. Letters are sent to parents while the students receive advice via their tutors or through enrichment lessons or assemblies.

8. References

For references for higher education, see the separate guidance to tutors. For all other references (work experience, volunteering, internships, gap years, employment), where students ask staff to act as a reference, they should be advised to put the Headmaster as the referee. References are better coming from the school in order to avoid any negative comeback, such as a withdrawn job offer as result of adverse comment in reference. It is the school which is held accountable not an individual. As such, references are held on file for future use. In practice, the Headmaster will delegate the drafting of the reference to the appropriate housemaster or tutor. Historic references (longer than two years) would normally be brief and factual whilst stressing the lack of recent knowledge beyond school. If a student has kept contact with a particular teacher beyond school, then it is up to that individual whether they wish to be a referee but if they are doing this, it should be clear that this is a personal reference and not an official one from the school.

9. Results day

The students are given information about A-level results day in August via a joint letter from the Director of Studies, and Head of Sixth Form. An insert with this letter contains information for parents about how to navigate the complex confirmation and clearing processes on the 'Track' part of the UCAS website. Both key members of staff are present in school on results day to offer advice to students and parents who need it, either by e-mail, telephone or in person. This might be because expectations have been exceeded or otherwise. Contact is maintained with those who need it until the end of August when offers need to be confirmed, with clearing being the main query needing to be dealt with. Those students who had applied, withdrew from the application cycle or could not find a place are advised to contact the Head of Sixth Form in September and certainly a month before submitting an application for the next cycle.



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