



Haberdashers' **ABRAHAM DARBY** SIXTH FORM

SIXTH FORM HANDBOOK





Dear Student,

Whether you are an existing Academy student, or you are joining from another school, I offer you a warm welcome to the Sixth Form at Haberdashers' Abraham Darby.

*I hope your time with us will be valuable, enjoyable and rewarding and that your experience of the Sixth Form will be memorable. I want you to be successful and fully prepared for the next stage of your life journey, whether this is Higher/Further Education or the world of work. The Academy will ensure that you receive high quality teaching, lots of support and guidance and that you are provided with the equipment and facilities which will enhance your opportunities. But this alone will not be enough: **you** will need to work hard, be organised and fully committed to your studies.*

Whilst we are still a school, the Sixth Form is different - there is a distinct uniform, a place for you to gather as a year group, an expectation that you will take much greater ownership of your own learning and an opportunity to develop a sense of identity and belonging.

We have high expectations of all our Sixth Form students and we encourage you to be as involved as possible in all aspects of Academy life. We expect you will play an active role in supporting and leading younger students to success and acting as role models in terms of behaviour, attitude and presentation.

Over the next two years of Sixth Form you will form close friendships, develop excellent working relationships with your teachers and fully involve yourself in many aspects of Academy life. This will generate enjoyment, fun and a sense of belonging, but you must remember it is also requiring hard work and determination.

The very best of luck!

Head of Sixth Form

Learning to Learn

In the Sixth Form you will be studying subjects at a noticeably higher level than GCSE or Level 2 BTEC. Many of you will be studying completely new subjects. In order to succeed at this higher level, you will need to improve your study skills, i.e. learn how to learn! There are three key principles to improving your study skills at Sixth Form level:

- **Accepting responsibility for your own learning.** *You will have a very active role in your learning: read as much as you can, research on your own initiative, ask questions in class, actively plan your work and try to manage your time efficiently. Recommended reading lists will be provided.*
- **Student-centred learning.** *There are many ways for you to learn: by listening, discussing, observing, reading, researching, writing and teaching others. Work on all of these skills.*
- **Revision and examination technique** *It is important that you revise and prepare effectively for these exams. Ask subject teachers for guidance if you are unsure about how to do this. In 100% course work-based subjects, deadlines must be adhered to.*

Accepting Responsibility for your Learning

- **Motivation**

In accepting responsibility for your learning and development, you will need to have your future in mind. If you want to choose from a wide range of Higher Education courses and institutions, or follow other career routes, you need the best possible A2 and Level 3 grades.

- **Planning and Time Management**

Planning is part of taking responsibility for your own learning. Much of the work in the Sixth Form is set well in advance, e.g. an essay or a piece of reading. It is an important skill to be able to plan when and how you will do each piece of work you are set. The essay will require some reading, perusal and note-making followed by writing the essay itself. You should perhaps set aside three evenings to complete this task and plan it around other pieces of work so that you meet all the deadlines. A diary is issued to help you. Time Management means managing your time efficiently so that you can do everything you want to do, which includes having a social life. It involves looking at a deadline and working backwards to plan how that deadline will be met. It might go something like this:

- Try to plan a week in advance. Before you finish work in the evening, look at your weekly plan, check that you have achieved what you planned to achieve and think ahead to the next day and decide what you need to do.
- Remember there are 168 hours in a week which should allow you to carry out all your academic work, extra-curricular contribution and have a social life (and sleep). Manage your time, don't waste it!
- Decide what has to be done for a piece of work to be completed, e.g. research, reading, note-making, planning and writing.
- Decide how much time you need for each of these processes and then plan to carry out the work during available slots of time in the forthcoming week.
- Do not leave work until the night before a deadline. Give yourself time to re-read and reflect on what you have done and rewrite, as necessary. Remember missing a deadline is **not** acceptable.

- **When Studying**

Studying requires self-discipline and self-motivation. Have a positive attitude and get into the habit of studying. Concentrate when studying and make sure you are free from distractions. It is often best to undertake the hardest tasks first when you are at your most alert and leave the easiest tasks till last when you are tired.

Student-Centred Learning

• Classwork

Much of your learning will take place in the classroom. This should be an active process, not a passive one. Your teachers will use class time to share information, ideas and arguments. You need to listen carefully but also ask questions, initiate discussions and solve problems.

• Note Taking

Whatever subjects you are learning, you will have to make notes. The purpose of making notes is to record information, ideas and arguments and to aid learning. You will find yourself making notes during class work and when you are working on your own. Everyone develops their own method of note taking but, in essence, notes should clearly record the most important information and ideas in a format that you find easy to set down and read. There are a variety of methods for making notes. You might like to experiment until you find the method that best suits you:

- ✓ Try to avoid “copying down” – note taking is a real skill that requires focus and concentration.
- ✓ Sequential Notes - these are notes that follow an ordered or sequential pattern; they might involve using numbers or bullet points.
- ✓ Creative pattern or spider diagram notes - the theme is written in the middle of the page and lines radiate from the centre to link the central theme to other themes or ideas.
- ✓ There are many other kinds of notes such as drawing a table or diagram.

• Reading

Reading is a vital study skill. Your teachers will provide you with the most important books and articles but you should use your own initiative and read as widely as possible. Your reading should be *active*, i.e. decide which parts of the book you should read. You do not always have to start on page one and read through to the end. Look at the contents or index pages to decide which parts of a book to read. Reviewing notes is also part of reading.

Scanning – This means not reading every word on a page but looking for key words or phrases and then focusing in on them.

Skim reading – This is the technique of reading a book or article or part of a book/article very quickly by looking at the contents page, by reading the first paragraphs of each chapter and chapter summaries. You will ignore some chapters or paragraphs that are not relevant to your requirements. You will focus on the chapters or paragraphs that are relevant to your purpose.

Critical reading – Don't accept everything you read at face value. Text books will be useful and reliable but beware of information you find on the web (Wikipedia in particular).

Making notes on your reading – Record bibliographical details from any publication you intend to note, i.e. name of author, title of publication, date of publication etc. These will often need to be submitted with coursework.

• Research

Your teachers will advise you on text books, articles and websites to read and refer to. There is a vast amount of information available to you: books, journals, newspapers, internet, specialists, etc. Use your initiative.

• Communicating

Talking and writing are two very important tools that aid the learning process. Your teachers will encourage you to talk constructively in class; they want you to ask questions and to discuss problems and issues. It is a strong indicator that you are engaged in the subject and learning. Writing will help you to remember and understand. It is probably the most important method of expressing your knowledge and understanding of a subject. This is how teachers and examiners judge your knowledge and understanding by looking at your written coursework and your written exam work. Writing skills include the ability to express oneself clearly, presenting information and ideas in an appropriate format and paying attention to accuracy of spelling and grammar.

- **Revision and Examination Techniques**

Revision should not be something you do a few days before an exam. It is something you should build into your regular studying. Review your notes as soon as possible, preferably the same day as you make them. Ideally you should set aside time once a week to reflect on the work you have covered during the week. You should confirm that you have understood the key issues and have the relevant information. If you have not, then ask your teacher for clarification. You should make sure that your notes and written work are properly filed and ordered. Revision should be an active process. Try to look at and answer questions from past papers. Make up your own examination questions and then answer them. Try to write out your concise notes without referring to them. Discuss issues and information with friends. Use your teachers to clarify anything you do not understand. Remember the 5 Ps:

PLANNING AND PREPARATION PREVENT POOR PERFORMANCE

or

FAILURE TO PREPARE = PREPARATION TO FAIL

- **Preparing for Exams**

Make sure that you know exactly what form the exam will take: i.e. will it involve problem solving, will it be more of a test of knowledge or of understanding, how long will it last, etc? It is most likely that you will do a mock exam before the real one. In any event, you need to know as much about the exam as possible. The use of past papers and mark schemes will give you an idea of what examiners are looking for and how best to answer questions. Practice exams at home in exam conditions to ensure you get the timing right.

- **Get organised!**

You should start preparing for exams many weeks before you sit them. Get your resources organised. Sort out your notes, make sure that you have the right text books. **Produce a detailed, daily written revision plan.** Make revision notes based on your main study notes, text books and any essays or class work that you have done. The revision notes might take the form of lists of basic ideas, concise summaries, topic outlines, annotated diagrams, definitions you must remember, etc. Try to condense each set of revision notes onto one side of A4 paper or an index card for quick reference and rapid and frequent reading. Much thought should go into this condensing process; it helps you think about the topic and forces you to consider the key ideas and key information.

Attendance

Attendance is one of the most important factors of your success and will therefore be closely tracked and monitored. It is a requirement of the Academy Sixth Form that all students must attend full time, including lessons, independent study periods, mentor time, assemblies and other enrichment activities that you will choose. The only exception to this is if students do not have a period 5 lesson. If this is the case, then students may leave site but must be out of the building before the start of the last lesson. Poor attendance will have a negative effect on your progress, your grades and your life in the Sixth Form in general. It will also affect the reference that the Academy must write about you at the end of the Sixth Form which you will need to apply to university or for jobs.

Students must therefore aim for 100% attendance; below 95% will be a concern and action will be taken, as set out in the Rewards and Sanctions section.

As a result, you must always remember to:

- You must sign in every morning on the Ipad on the Attendance Desk or in the Sixth Form Area or via the sign-in app.
- Be punctual for lessons.
- Sign in for your Independent Study periods and then remain in the Study Areas.
- Catch up on any lesson you miss. It is your responsibility to hand work in, meet deadlines and to provide a valid reason for your absence.

- Be aware of your own attendance percentage and number of missed lessons. These will be a regular point of discussion in Mentor time and a good indicator of your performance and likelihood of your success.
- Always sign out at the Attendance Desk if you leave the Academy premises and sign in again on your return.

If you are absent due to illness, you or your parents/carers must telephone or email the Academy before 8.30am. Upon return to the Academy, you must ensure that you go and see your teachers to catch up on the work you missed. If you know in advance that you are going to be absent (i.e. university visit, medical appointment, driving lesson, driving test...) you will need to complete a Leave of Absence Form from outside the Sixth Form Administrator's Office, preferably at least 48 hours before your absence.

It is not recommended that students take family or other holidays during term time. Students should aim for full attendance so that they can maximise their chances of top grades and engage fully in Academy life.

Your attendance is an indicator of your commitment. Should attendance fall below 90% (and there are no exceptional circumstances that the Academy has been made aware of), then we reserve the right to consider your place at the Academy and students may be required to pay for their external exams.

Curriculum and Study Expectations

At the Academy Sixth Form, we will expect the vast majority of students to study 3 subjects in Year 12. Some students may take 4 subjects depending on individual ability or course demands, each case is taken on individual merit and at the discretion of the Head of Sixth Form. All students will be expected to take part in enrichment activities in the Sixth Form.

Independent study is crucial to ensure good progress. There is no such thing as a "Free Period". A period where a student has no lesson is a study period and there is never an excuse for saying that there is no work to do. There is ALWAYS some work to do. Some students make a big mistake believing that they can succeed by just attending lessons.

You need to be pro-active in your studies and look to learn as much and as often as possible. We suggest that for every hour spent in the classroom, you must spend at least another hour of independent study completing homework, coursework, wider reading, research, writing up of class work or revision (which must be done all year round and not just before exams). External reading around topics is often the difference between gaining and missing out on university places/ apprenticeships.

You must make sure that you manage your time appropriately so that you can meet all deadlines for homework, coursework and other assignments and that you do not feel "overloaded". Universities and employers will ask information on your ability to meet deadlines and we make specific reference to this on all reference documentation.

Lessons

Attendance at all lessons is compulsory. Lesson times at the Academy Sixth Form are the same as for the rest of the Academy. You will be expected to be in the Academy from 8.25am.

Mentor time 08:30-9.05	Lesson 1 9.05-10.05	Lesson 2 10.05-11.05	Break 11.05-11.30	Period 3 11.30-12.30	Period 4 12:30-14.00 <small>(Including lunch break)</small>	Period 5 14.00-15.00
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Independent Study Periods

Unlike GCSE, Sixth Formers have some time during the week when they do not have lessons. This is an ideal time to do some wider reading, consolidate notes or research material for an essay. Students are expected to work in the LRC or study areas during **Study Periods** – in silence. When students want to do group work, they may use the tables in the Sixth Form Centre.

Sixth Form Centre

Use of the Sixth Form Centre and study areas is a privilege. The Sixth Form Centre and study areas are solely for Sixth Form use during the Academy day. It is an adult environment and must be treated as such. Students are expected to treat them with respect or that privilege will be withdrawn. There is a reference area where you will be able to research universities, colleges and employment. We request that students:

- Put all rubbish in the bins provided.
- No food or drink will be allowed.
- Refrain from shouting.
- Do not play with sports equipment.
- Do not play music, if non-educational or non-course related or watch video's/DVD's (except at break/lunch).
- Keep feet off the furniture.
- Treat everyone with respect.

A list of free subject specific rooms (Art, D&T, Performing Arts, PE, etc.) will be displayed on the notice board inside the Sixth Form Centre. Health and Safety permitting, you will be allowed to work in these rooms. You may also use the LRC as a place of research and study if it is not being used. The Sixth Form students are encouraged to use the Restaurant during study periods.

Lunch Arrangements

Students have access to their own sixth form café and are also welcome to eat in the main school restaurant. Students are also permitted offsite at lunch but must ensure they sign in and out of the building as appropriate and ensure they are on time for their next lesson.

Behaviour

We expect all our students to be role models at all times, and as such to be mature, polite, helpful, hard-working, honest and respectful of our Academy and its members.

Tobacco, Alcohol and Illegal Substances

Students are not allowed to smoke, to bring or consume any alcohol or illegal substances onto or near the premises. Students are not allowed to engage in any behaviour which is considered unacceptable by the Academy. Such behaviour may result in immediate exclusion from the Academy.

Dress Code

The Academy uniform is designed to reflect the business or professional environment and Sixth Formers are required to wear it appropriately. Students' hair should be well-kept, clean and moderate in style, length and treatment; artificial streaks or colourings that stand out in any way will not be allowed. The Academy reserves the right to ask students to cut their hair, change their hairstyle or shave facial hair if their presentation falls below an acceptable level.

Jewellery must be discreet and minimal. You must **not wear** any facial jewellery other than a pair of earrings if you so wish. Shoes must be appropriately practical and sensible. Heels of medium height, if reasonably robust, are acceptable. Stilettos, trainers, canvas shoes and Ugg-type boots will not be allowed.

Mobile Phones and Other Electronic Devices

The use of mobile phones and other electronic devices are not allowed in the Academy, except in the Sixth Form Centre, if used discreetly. Should you want to listen to music in the Study Room during Independent Study periods, you will be allowed to do so provided that you use discreet earphones and that volume is kept low and does not disrupt others.

You will not be allowed to use any phones etc in any other areas than the one mentioned above - even walking between lessons. You must also ensure that you remove your earphones when moving around the Academy. They should not be visible.

Part Time Work

Students benefit in many ways from employment, they will learn valuable transferable skills that will help them in later life, they also gain experience that will help UCAS and job applications later on, whilst also earning some money to help their independence; however, part time work should not distract from their academic progress, our recommendation would be no more than 10-15 hours per week and to ensure that the times of employment are conducive to study. No students are allowed to take time off school for paid employment, any students found doing so may be asked to leave.

Cars/Motorcycles

A parking permit is required. These can be obtained from Sixth Form Office. Driving carelessly or dangerously on or near the Academy premises may result in immediate exclusion from the Academy. Parking in the Academy site is limited so we will ask Sixth Form students to use the Leisure Centre car park.

The Enrichment Programme

All Sixth Form students are encouraged to participate in an enrichment curriculum. This will consist of Mentor Time, IAG sessions and Work Related Learning. Insight sessions are compulsory.

Sixth Form students will also be given the opportunity to get involved in voluntary work in our local community. Opportunities to become a mentor, to work on a one-to-one basis with students in lower years and to develop leadership skills will also be available to Sixth Form students. Whenever possible, you will also be expected to take part in (and lead) the Academy enrichment programme, assemblies, charity and fundraising events.

The House System

In the Sixth Form, we will expect you to play a key and active role in the House System by continuing to support House activities. All Sixth Form students will be a member of a House. Students will be expected to attend all mentor periods and House assemblies. You will be asked to carry out roles around the Academy including duties, prefect positions and leadership roles within the House, helping with whole school activities such as assemblies, sports days and other House events. Engagement with your House will be one of the key factors in selecting senior positions for the Upper Sixth whilst also helping any UCAS job reference.

Personal Development and Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)

Issues related to careers, healthy living, personal safety and economic well-being will be addressed through Sixth Form assemblies, Mentor and Insight. A wide range of topics will be covered, aiming for your involvement as much as possible. It is important that you leave with an understanding of basic politics, health issues such as safe driving and alcohol use, as well as learning skills to live independently, including basic financial management.

Towards the end of Year 12 and throughout Year 13, we will prepare you for employment and Higher Education. You will have the opportunity to go to Higher Education Conferences, university open days and business visits. We will also teach interview skills and mock interviews for you will be held on a regular basis.

Mentors will closely monitor students, act as a communication link, write references and generally guide you through the Sixth Form. During IAG sessions, you will be given career information, guidance and practical help

with target setting, revision techniques, coping with exam pressure, writing CVs, personal statements and with the Universities & Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) applications. Insight sessions are compulsory for all students in Sixth Form. Whole year meetings will be held during Insight as and when required.

Voluntary Work Programme

We will offer Sixth Form students a number of voluntary work opportunities to develop organisational and interpersonal skills, which will be essential at university or in employment. Once accepted on to the programme, you will sign a contract and have a job specification as you would in normal employment.

Activities will be carried out in the Academy and will include helping younger students in lessons, the Young Enterprise Scheme, supporting departments, supporting the Academy Reception, organising and maintaining school displays, and leading charity initiatives.

We will also provide you with opportunities to work outside the Academy with local businesses, and serve the community by helping those less fortunate, less privileged, less able or younger than yourself. Typical venues are hospitals, charity shops, old people's homes and primary schools.

You will maintain a file to record the tasks you carry out and will request staff to write supporting statements in your file. If you wish, you will be able to take part in the voluntary work programme through the Duke of Edinburgh Award programme.

Sixth Form Senior Student Team and Prefects

We value the opinion and the input of our students in bringing about change and driving improvement for the whole Academy. The Senior Student Team, led by the Head Boy, Head Girl, School Captain and House Captains and their deputies, is at the heart of this process.

Students will have the opportunity both formally and informally to express their ideas and opinions through council meetings and from conversations with the Senior Student Team (known affectionately as the "Front Team").

Financial Help

You can apply for a variety of schemes to help Sixth Form Students with course-related equipment, materials, field trips and travel costs etc, most notably the sixth form bursary. The Academy will help students to apply for grants which will be available to support them in their education in the Sixth Form. More information will be available in September. Sixth Form students who believe they are entitled to Free School Meals (FSM) must contact Student Welfare/House Office.

Rewards and Sanctions

We believe a system of rewards is just as important in the Sixth Form as it is lower down the Academy. We will therefore celebrate success and seek to reward achievement in various ways:

- Acknowledge academic excellence in lessons, homework, coursework, assessment and external examinations through teacher praise, prize giving and emails/telephone calls/letters sent home.
- Recognise good leadership potential through the appointment of Head Students, Deputy Head Students and Senior Prefects.
- Reward and reinforce positive behaviour such as adhering to the dress code, attendance, punctuality, completing homework/assignments, independent study and tracking grade performance.

It is very rare that a Sixth Former will face any form of sanction. However, where appropriate, the following may be used at the discretion of the teaching staff:-

- After school detention
- Removal of Sixth Form privileges
- Internal suspension
- Close supervision with the Vice Principals and Sixth Form staff
- External suspension (temporary or permanent)

In order to function efficiently and for the safety of all, to help us achieve our aim of providing a high quality education for all students, we have drawn up a Sixth Form Code of Conduct, which is a “contract” to which we expect that you and your parents/carers will adhere. In the event that the contract is broken, the Sixth Form Disciplinary Procedure will be enforced (see below).

Please remember, as a Sixth Former you are an important role model to younger years.

Sixth Form Disciplinary Procedure

1. If a student fails to abide by the Code of Conduct, he/she will be spoken to by their teacher or Mentor who will provide support to enable the student to overcome their difficulty. The incident will be recorded in the student file and the Sixth Form Leadership Team will be informed. The student may be asked to attend catch up sessions at lunch time or after the Academy day to enable them to complete missing or incomplete work.
2. If this is not successful and the code of conduct is broken again, the student will receive a **verbal warning** from the Sixth Form Leadership Team. Parents/carers will be contacted by phone or a letter will be sent home explaining this. Once again, the key focus will be to provide appropriate support to ensure that the problem does not occur again.
3. If there are subsequent and/or repeated incidents the student will be interviewed by the Head of Sixth Form and a **formal written warning** will be issued to the student. A copy will be sent home. The student may be put on a report to monitor their progress and help them improve. Parents/carers may be asked to come into the Academy for a meeting with a member of the Sixth Form Leadership Team.
4. In the very unusual circumstances of this action being unsuccessful, a **final written warning** will be issued following discussion with the students, parents and teachers.
5. If there is still no improvement students will be **excluded for a fixed term**. Fixed term exclusions may lead to **permanent exclusion**. It is expected that this will be **very rare**. Please note that physical violence and abusive language towards fellow students and staff will result in automatic fixed-term exclusion.

Examples of issues resulting in students being placed on the Sixth Form Disciplinary Procedure

Stage 1 Teacher/Mentor intervention	Failure to complete homework on time on several occasions Persistent failure to bring correct books and equipment to lessons Poor attendance
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	Poor punctuality Poor attitude in class – to other students or staff Use of mobile phone in lessons Lack of adherence to Dress Code Poor behaviour around the Academy
Stage 2 Verbal Warning	More than two concerns identified from Stage 1 Attendance below 90% - at lessons, IAG sessions, mentor periods, etc. Being off-site without permission/signing out Inappropriate use of Academy computer network
Stage 3 Written Warning	Persistence of any concerns identified in Stage 2 Persistent attendance below 85% Truancy Plagiarism of work Assignment / Coursework deadline missed Serious discipline problems Bullying or verbal abuse of other students/staff Breaches of alcohol and drugs prohibitions
Stage 4 Final Written	Persistence of any concerns identified in Stage 3 A very serious incident e.g. involving violence or illegal activities
Stage 5 Permanent Exclusion	Persistence of concerns identified in Stage 4

Progress Monitoring, Target Setting and Tracking

In order to assess students' progress, monitoring of attainment and effort will take place at regular intervals throughout the Sixth Form.

At the start of Year 12 students will be given a target grade for each of their subjects. It will be based on data and knowledge about prior performance (GCSE grades) and will be discussed between students and subject teacher and should represent a realistic yet challenging target.

There is a Year 13 parental consultation evening in the Autumn term and a Year 12 parental consultation evening in the Summer term. This will be a chance for students and their parents/carers to meet the individual subject teachers to discuss specific strengths and areas for improvement in each subject.

If students are underperforming in several subjects, they will be asked to meet with the sixth form team so that appropriate intervention can be taken. This may be additional support from subject teachers or mentors, additional supervised study sessions or a review of the subjects being taken. Parents will be involved where a problem persists.

Communicating with Home

We know that communicating with parents/carers is important in helping all students achieve their potential; therefore it is important that we have the correct contact details for home. This should include home, work and mobile phone numbers for all relevant people along with functioning e-mail addresses.

Moving into Year 13

Just as there are entrance criteria for admission into the Sixth Form as a Year 12, there are also continuation criteria at the end of Year 12 as you move into Year 13:

- Should a student's attendance fall below the satisfactory levels, they may not be allowed to continue with that subject in the second year of the Sixth Form.
- If a student shows a lack of effort, and therefore makes unsatisfactory progress in their subjects, they may not be allowed to continue with that subject in the second year of the Sixth Form.

UCAS and Employment - The Next Step

UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) is the body that will organise all the applications to Universities and other Further Education institutions including Art Schools. Universities will be looking for students who have the intellectual ability to cope with the course, have the right attitude and necessary motivation and who will contribute to the life of the University.

Entry profiles on university websites often give a clear statement of the grades and other requirements universities are looking for. In some subjects such as medicine, non-academic qualities such as leadership and team-working skills and the ability to cope with a demanding lifestyle as well as relevant work experience are particularly important.

Just because your predicted grades are in line with the standard offer, it does not automatically mean you will receive an offer. Many universities have far more high calibre candidates applying than they have places. Often, high grades are an indication of the popularity of the course, not necessarily the quality. You may be asked for particular grades or a point's total. The decisions about who will be made offers are made by the admissions tutors at the individual institutions.

A Levels carry the following points:

A level and Advanced VCE

Official title: Advanced GCE and Advanced VCE

Grade	Tariff points
A*	56
A	48
B	40
C	32
D	24
E	16

Size band: 4

Grade bands: 4-14

Offered by AQA, CCEA, OCR, Pearson Edexcel and WJEC

A level grade	New Tariff
A*A*A*	168
A*A*A	160
A*AA	152
AAA	144
AAB	136
ABB	128
BBB	120
BBC	112
BCC	104
CCC	96
CCD	88
CDD	80
DDD	72

The route into Higher Education can be daunting and seem like a very long way off. However, it comes around faster than you think but there is a lot of help at hand. The process is as follows:

ALL Sixth Form students will be asked to write a personal statement at the end of Year 12 whether they intend to apply to university or not. This will help with job and apprenticeship applications as well as university applications.

Higher Education and Careers for Sixth Formers

You should already have given some thought to what career and/or university course you would like to follow. It is important that you continue to think and find out about likely university courses and careers during Year 12. There are over 300 Higher Education Institutions in the UK offering more than 50,000 courses!

The decision-making timetable is tight! You will apply to university in the first weeks of Year 13, though the process for preparing for this starts in earnest in the summer term of Year 12.

Autumn Year 12 – You should be giving some thought to possible university courses and career paths. You should talk to your Mentor and to specialist advisers about A level entry requirements, career opportunities and recommended universities. You should be arranging work experience especially for vocational courses such as Medicine or Veterinary Science, though it can be helpful across the board. All higher education applicants should be reading widely and voraciously. You will need to refer to your wider reading in your personal statement. There will be regular meetings for early applicants – i.e., those applying to Oxbridge, or for medicine, dentistry, or veterinary science courses: the deadline for UCAS applications for these is late September/early October of Year 13, whereas the deadline for other courses is in Spring of Year 13.

Spring Year 12 – You should be narrowing down your course choices and have collected quite a lot of information on the type of course you would like to take and have some ideas of the types of university you would like to attend. You should also be thinking about whether you would like to take a gap year before going to University (i.e., spend a year doing something other than formal education before you start at university). You should definitely be arranging some work experience. You should attend any Careers Convention organised by the Academy or held locally. This will also be of help to those students seeking to move straight into a particular career. By this point you should have researched, in detail, what requirements employers' value in your field of interest. You will attend the Higher Education Presentations at a local university and then start visiting your favoured institutions.

Summer Year 12 – By the end of the Summer Term you should have more or less decided which course you want to study and where. You will attend presentations on the UCAS application and how to write a personal statement. All students will have training on interview techniques. You will then produce the first draft of your personal statement.

Autumn Year 13 – You will have to complete your UCAS or other application form by December, by the end of September for Oxbridge, Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary science. By the end of the Autumn Term you may start to receive offers from your chosen universities, though they have until late in the Spring Term to make their decisions if they wish. Specific dates will vary from year to year but these will be well publicised. Early applicants (Oxbridge, medics, vets etc) prepare for interviews which occur in early December.

Spring Year 13 – You have to choose which university offer will be your **Firm** choice and which will be your **Insurance** choice in case your grades are not as good as expected. Where possible your Insurance choice should be asking for lower grades than your firm choice.

Useful Websites

Higher Education

The definitive website for looking at Higher Education courses: www.ucas.com

Features video studies by applicants about their UCAS journey and 'How to' guides: www.ucas.tv

Open Days: www.opendays.com

Finding the right university: www.push.co.uk

Student Loan Company: www.slc.co.uk

Useful website for those interested in Vet Science: www.rcvs.org.uk

Information about law: www.sra.org.uk

Information about medicine: www.bma.org.uk

Provides clear and detailed job information: www.prospects.ac.uk.

Student feedback on courses/institutions: www.whatuni.com

Information on Student Finance: www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

Choosing a University: www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk

University statistics and facts: www.unistats.co.uk

Revision: www.getrevising.co.uk, www.s-cool.co.uk/a-level

Careers & Employment

Excellent for work experience courses and careers: www.isco.org.uk

Kudos (Finding the right career): www.cascaid.co.uk

Careers Advice: <http://icould.com>, www.careersbox.co.uk

Volunteering: www.volunteering.org.uk

Apprenticeship: www.apprenticeships.org.uk

A Year in Industry programme: www.yini.org.uk

General

National Union of Students: www.nus.org.uk

Not going to Uni?: www.notgoingtouni.co.uk

Gap year opportunities: www.gapyear.com, www.lattitude.org.uk,

Expeditions for 17-24 year olds: www.raleighinternational.org

Volunteering opportunities: www.aventure.co.uk