



Whitburn Church of England Academy

An Academy with Specialist Status in Maths and Computing

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'Excellence for All'

24th March 2020

Advice for Year 12 students during school closure

Dear student,

We would like to start by saying that we hope you are safe and well and that your families are too during this unusual and worrying period. As it looks increasingly like the closure may be for an extended period, I appreciate that many of you will be starting to worry how this will impact on you.

The two concerns really are how 'de-skilled' some of you could potentially become if you return to Sixth Form after an extended absence if you don't keep some routine, and fail to keep up your learning. Secondly, thinking ahead I can see a situation where we could struggle to finish teaching the specification before your finals next summer. Unfortunately, we are still unclear at this stage how this may be considered.

The best summary of all questions and answers can be [found here](#) and whilst most of it applies only to Year 11 and 13 students, point 23 refers to the situation I have just described. Like much else at the moment, it is very much "we'll get back to you on that one". Obviously, as soon as we get any clarity we will be back in touch.

There is lots you can do to stay skilled, stay safe and stay busy! Make yourself a daily schedule and start working through the following suggestions...

1. Continuing with your A-Level and BTEC studies

To avoid coming back to Sixth Form de-skilled, it is imperative you maintain some structure and routine to your day and keep up your studies. Teachers have set [tasks for an initial two-week period](#) (homepage, click 'pupil') and there will be further updates if we were to remain closed after the Easter break.

Once you have completed set tasks, you should be proactive and start to look through the next sections of your specifications. Many of you will have access to work and resources via subject-specific Microsoft Teams and Office 365 accounts. SENECA learning is an increasingly popular resource as is physicsandmathstutor.com.

PTO

Document available in large font, alternative language or audio format on request



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2. Working on, or beginning an EPQ (Extended Project Qualification)

Do not forget that an EPQ is an A Level which carries UCAS points and is highly valued by all universities. As it is an independent project now is an ideal time to get started. There is a folder of EPQ resources on O365/SixthFormStudentResources worth exploring.

For any year 12s thinking about picking up an EPQ please get in touch with Miss Boswell and she will add you to the EPQ Teams site where you can have a look through the information and what the requirements of the project are. She will answer any questions that you have through email.

For students currently working on an EPQ; keep working on your projects. Make sure your initial ideas and candidate proposal is completed and then send to Miss Boswell (via teams/email is fine) then you can continue with the planning proposal. You can use this time to collect sources and start the write-up of your project. There are plenty of resources on Teams and Miss Boswell will continue to update and add new resources that may help. Keep checking Teams for updates. If you have any questions please just get in touch with Miss Boswell directly.

3. Super Curricular, Enrichment and Work Experience

There are myriad ways in which you can go deeper with your learning in support of your A-Levels and your UCAS application in particular. Many organisations have responded to the Covid-19 situation by opening up their platforms so more students can benefit. [Massolit.io](https://massolit.io) offers online lectures and [jstor.org](https://www.jstor.org) is a treasure trove for those studying history and the arts.

We have long advocated MOOCs as excellent way to deepen your interest and your understanding of a topic. There are MOOCs on all kinds of subjects, which will help you discern your future. Use the MOOC tool on Unifrog to explore these. We have also pushed the essay competitions offered by several Oxbridge colleges. Entering these could lead to a cash prize, but more importantly build your skills and expertise looking fab on that Personal Statement. See the list of competitions in O365/SixthFormStudentResources/EssayCompetitions. Also ensure you have registered for the free FT.com access, link in O365.

There are some great hashtags on Twitter such as #MuseumFromHome (check out @Sacha_coward and the Titanic pig!) and #ScienceFromHome. Many thanks to our subject reps who are running Twitter feeds and keeping us informed and entertained with their activities. Khan Academy, TED Talks and YouTube contain many excellent resources too.

With Work Experience week also being threatened by this outbreak (not cancelled as yet, but companies already suggesting they cannot take students due to current uncertainties), be on the lookout for virtual alternatives. We have added some info to the end of this letter, and some additional opportunities as a pdf attachment for you to check out.

4. Working on your 'next steps'

Unifrog is our hub for all CEIAG (Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance). Please ensure you use this time to explore its full potential. As a minimum, you should have completed the personality test and explored the results; updated your competencies log and explored the careers library. You may have started searching for degrees, apprenticeships, Oxbridge colleges, overseas universities using the different widgets on the platform.

You may have seen this recent article on BBC news, which highlights how important doing your research is: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-51676530>

For research about employability, we would guide you to the 'careers library' section of Unifrog which will help you to consider Labour Market Information (LMI) regarding availability of jobs in your chosen sector.

Some of you may have lost the opportunity to attend Open Days at universities you were thinking of submitting an application to. We always host an HE and School Leavers' Fayre in June but this looks very unlikely given that a number of exhibitors have already withdrawn. Open Days can be reassuring as you are intending to spend three years of your life there, not to mention the financial liability. Almost all have now ceased face-to face activities, but check websites for 'virtual' alternatives. UCAS hosts '[virtual tours](#)' of many universities which you may like to try out.

Northumbria University's supported entry scheme, NU Entry, is a structured programme for Year 12 students who meet specific academic and circumstantial criteria. By participating in the NU Entry scheme, you will be provided with the opportunity to develop skills necessary for successful undergraduate study and get the opportunity to earn 16 NU Entry points, which are the equivalent to UCAS tariff points when applying to Northumbria University undergraduate programmes (certain exclusions apply). [Apply here](#).

For those considering an overseas adventure, or as a back-up option, we have worked with A Star Future to provide information and they have sent the following: "Last week we took the precaution of recording one of our school presentations. We have made this available on [YouTube](#) for the duration of the current situation. The video lasts for about 32 minutes and if I were able to edit it professionally there are a couple of parts I would have taken out but in general it gives a fair impression of our regular presentation".

Do not hesitate to get in touch with myself or Mr Moore for advice and guidance. We both have families, so usual working hours please if you expect a quick reply.

5. Progression to non-University routes

Mr Moore is the guru when it comes to the options outside of the UCAS system and most of you considering this route have begun to work closely with him. This support continues and you should maintain regular contact so he can support your searches and applications. Unifrog is a good resource with their Apprenticeships tool and you should register with the [National Apprenticeships Service](#).

Apologies this has become rather a long letter but there is a lot to communicate. Please continue to watch the school website and our official social media channels for further updates. If you have further queries, please contact me at lcraggs@whitburncofeacademy.org

Please heed the advice and stay at home in the coming weeks. Observe social distancing and keep washing those hands!

Yours faithfully,



Mr Lee M Craggs
Head of Sixth Form
Whitburn Church of England Academy

Virtual Work Experience Opportunities

See also the pdf attachment to this email

[Immersive Career Experiences in Investment Banking, Psychology, Medicine and Engineering live and online.](#)

We are delighted to announce that InvestIN will be providing some of its most popular career experience programmes LIVE and ONLINE in April for students aged 15-18. These programmes give students the opportunity to gain crucial career coaching in a live, interactive environment, from the comfort of their own homes.

We received multiple requests for this given the current restrictions on travel and have been working hard behind the scenes to make this an immediate reality.

The content of these programmes will be identical to our in-person one-day programmes and delivered by top professionals who will be on-hand throughout to answer your students' questions live from London.

Click on any of the programmes below to see full details and register now:

The Young Investment Banker Programme: 18th April<<https://investineducation.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=42ef3d3a89e86b8375cadb9aa&id=25a4929f4e&e=b72b0d0e4d>>

The Young Engineer Programme: 19th April<<https://investineducation.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=42ef3d3a89e86b8375cadb9aa&id=c42a76d24b&e=b72b0d0e4d>>

The Young Doctor Programme: 25th April<<https://investineducation.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=42ef3d3a89e86b8375cadb9aa&id=31ada93d6e&e=b72b0d0e4d>>

The Young Psychologist Programme: 26th April<<https://investineducation.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=42ef3d3a89e86b8375cadb9aa&id=0af7edbbcc&e=b72b0d0e4d>>

These programmes are for students aged 15-18. Places are limited and will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.