



From the Head of Career Guidance: Michael Triff, BSc, MSc, QCD

8 September 2020

Dear Parents of Sixth Form Pupils:

It is my pleasure to share with you some important notices about Abingdon School's Career Guidance Programme for 2020/21.

Expanded Career Guidance Programme

Four years ago, Abingdon School took the exciting step of investing in a new, full-time career guidance role, appointing me, Michael Triff, as Head of Career Guidance.

I have designed and now run an exciting and expansive Career Guidance Programme which takes pupils aged 11-18 (1st Year to U6) on a journey of self-discovery, helping them to think in terms of pursuing a personal mission, grasp what is meant by career, identify potentially suitable future occupations, understand and experience the world of work, make educational choices informed by careers planning, and learn key skills needed to gain future employment.

In short, my goal is to help every pupil think carefully about, and take practical steps towards realising, his future career.

The Programme combines printed and online career information resources with career thinking/planning lessons; employability skills workshops; financial education seminars; CV, cover letter and interview training; one-to-one guidance meetings, and a wide range of events and activities, including talks by working professionals, an annual careers fair, several career advice evenings, two work experience schemes, and meetings with British Armed Forces careers advisers.

Every year group enjoys a set of bespoke activities designed for its step in this journey, with one year's activities smoothly transitioning into that of the next year. This design ensures coherence from year to year and puts pupils in the best position possible to make informed educational choices at the end of each key stage in their education: GSCE, A-Level, and all post-18 options, including Higher Education.

For more information, visit <https://www.abingdon.org.uk/academic/career-guidance/>

Sixth Form Careers Evening

The Old Abingdonian Club, Abingdon School's alumni association, will host a Sixth Form Careers Evening (online via Zoom) on Friday 20 November 2020 starting at 7.00pm during which OAs at early or middle stages in their career will be online to share with Sixth Form pupils what they have learned since leaving Abingdon, including insights into their current job and choices they made during their career

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journey to date. The event helps to inform pupils of options to pursue after leaving Abingdon, as well as gives them insights that might influence longer-term career planning. I hope you will encourage your son to attend once he receives his invitation from the OA Club in October.

Career Guidance Meetings

Your son is encouraged to schedule a one-to-one meeting with me (either in person, with Covid-19 safety measures in place, or online via Zoom) if he is:

- interested in alternatives to attending university full-time, such as Higher National Qualifications, Foundation Degrees, National Vocational Qualifications, and Professional Qualifications; Higher and Degree Apprenticeships; and School Leaver Programmes
- thinking about taking a Gap Year and wants to understand what is involved
- needs general help with the next step in his career thinking

OA Club Summer Work Experience Scheme

The Old Abingdonian Club, Abingdon School's alumni association, recruits former pupils (OAs) to host high quality, unpaid, one to two-week work experience placements for pupils during the summer holiday between their L6 and U6 years. In addition to the pupil gaining invaluable work experience, host OAs and their organisations benefit from the work or project carried out by pupils. Each year, approximately 20 work experience placements are secured from OAs across a range of occupations and L6 pupils are invited to apply by Sunday 21 February 2021 (the last day of half-term break) for a placement. If your son is in L6, please encourage him to take advantage of this scheme when the summer work experience placements are announced at 6th Form assembly in late January. The running of the scheme is, of course, subject to the state of the Covid-19 pandemic and related government guidance at the end of 2020.

Abingdon Careers Convention

The annual Abingdon Careers Convention, jointly run by Abingdon School, St Helen and St Katharine, and Our Lady's Abingdon, is an excellent opportunity for pupils to gather information about and personal insights into occupations of interest and educational routes into those occupations. While it is a compulsory event for 5th year pupils, Sixth Form pupils are welcome to attend. It features parents and alumni of all three schools, as well as local employers, representing a wide range of occupations. Pupils can meet with 'career representatives' one-to-one or in small group discussions and also attend themed panel presentations. The next Abingdon Careers Convention will be held on Friday evening 12 March 2021, ideally in person, but potentially online, subject to the Covid-19 pandemic and related government guidance at the end of 2020. If the event goes ahead, your son will learn all about it at a year group assembly in early March. Later this term, I will be writing to you again to ask if you and/or your partner/spouse would be interested in volunteering (either in person or online) as a 'career representative' at this event. If potentially interested, please save the date in your diary now – thanks!

Gap Year Advice Evening

Is your son considering taking time off before entering university, starting work (including apprenticeships), or continuing in some form of further education or training? If so, this event is for him. Abingdon School and St Helen and St Katharine School will co-host a Gap Year Advice Evening for Sixth Form pupils on Thursday, 21 January 2021, 6.30-8.00pm, either in person or online, subject to the Covid-19 pandemic and related government guidance at the end of 2020. The event focuses on the pros and cons of taking a Gap Year; what experiences one can have during a

Gap Year; how to set personal goals and plan a Gap Year; and the types of costs of taking a Gap Year. If the event goes ahead, we will again be inviting former pupils from both schools (who took a Gap year) to speak as part of a panel. No booking is necessary; parents are welcome to attend.

North American Universities Advice Evening

Is your son thinking about applying to university in the US or Canada? If so, he should attend the North American Universities Advice Evening online via Zoom on Thursday 26 November 2020 from 6.30 to 8.00pm. This event kicks off the process for L6 boys who are seriously considering applying to North American universities. No booking is necessary; parents are welcome to attend. U6 pupils and parents are also welcome.

Personal Money Management Seminar Series

The Sixth Form 'Money Matters' Seminar Series features five financial education seminars, each on a different money management topic, including budgeting, banking, debt & insurance, student loans, and taxation. Seminars are open to all L6 and U6 students on an optional, walk-in basis and will be held in the board room of the 6th Form Centre from 12.50 to 1.40pm on consecutive Tuesdays in March/April, either side of term break.

Advice on Careers in the Armed Forces

Sixth Form pupils who are interested in learning about a career in the military should contact me to arrange a meeting at Abingdon School with an Armed Forces Career Adviser from the British Army (3 Dec), RAF (19 Nov) or Royal Navy/Royal Marines (3 Dec). You are also welcome to make an appointment for your son directly with an Armed Forces Career Adviser at their office in Oxford: 35 St. Giles, Oxford, OX1 3LJ. British Army: 01865 515989; Royal Air Force: 0345 605 5555; Royal Navy/Marines: 01865 553431.

If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions about the Career Guidance Programme, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Triff". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Triff".

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