



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

5 September 2023

Dear Parents of 6th Form Pupils:

It is my pleasure to share with you some important notices about Abingdon School's Career Guidance Programme for 2023/24.

Career Guidance Programme

Seven 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:

- be in touch with their values and what is important to them,
- grasp and gain insights into what is meant by 'career',
- identify potentially suitable future occupations,
- understand and experience the world of work,
- make educational choices informed by careers planning,
- learn key skills needed to gain future employment, and
- prepare to live independently after leaving school

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

The Programme combines printed and online career information resources with career thinking/planning lessons; employability skills workshops; financial education tutorials and seminars; CV, cover letter and interview training and practice; one-to-one guidance meetings, and a wide range of events and activities, including talks and classroom lessons with 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>.

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6th Form Careers Evening

The Old Abingdonian Club, Abingdon School's alumni association, will host a 6th Form Careers Evening on **Friday, 17 November 2023 from 6:00-9.00pm in the Yang Science Centre** (with an optional light supper for pupils served from 5.15pm in the Dining Hall – booking required). OAs at early or middle stages in their career will be on hand to share with 6th Form pupils what they have learned since leaving Abingdon, including insights into their current job and choices they made during their career 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 child to attend once they receive their invitation from the OA Club in October.

Career Guidance Meetings

Your child is encouraged to schedule a one-to-one meeting with me either in person or online via Zoom if they are:

- 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 want to understand what is involved
- need general help with the next step in their 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. If your child is in L6, please encourage them to take advantage of this scheme, and apply once the summer work experience placements are announced at 6th Form assembly in **late April 2023**.

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, 6th 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 careers. 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 **Thursday evening, 14 March 2024 from 6.45-9.15pm at Our Lady's Abingdon**. Your child will learn all about this event at a year group assembly in February and again 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 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 child 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 them. Abingdon School and St Helen and St Katharine

School will co-host a Gap Year Advice Evening for 6th Form pupils on **Thursday, 18 January 2024 from 7.00-8.30pm on Zoom**. The event will kick off with a presentation on electing, planning, and then managing a Gap Year. This will be followed by a presentation from Independent Gap Advice on travel abroad during a Gap Year. Then, a panel of SHSK and Abingdon School alumni will share their individual Gap Year stories. There will be an opportunity to ask questions of any of the speakers or the panelists. Parents are welcome to attend. Webinar registration for the webinar will open in November 2023.

North American Universities Advice Evening

Is your child thinking about applying to university in the US or Canada? If so, they should attend the North American Universities Advice Evening on **Monday, 4 December 2023 from 6.30 to 8.15pm on Zoom**. This event kicks off the process for L6 students who are seriously considering applying to North American universities. Parents of L6 are welcome to attend, as are U6 pupils and parents, too. *Note: While there is not another evening dedicated to universities in other parts of the world, I advise all 6th form students interested in applying to universities outside the UK.*

'Money Matters' Financial Education Seminar Series

The 6th Form 'Money Matters' Seminar Series features financial education seminars, each on a different money management topic, including budgeting, banking, debt, insurance, and taxation. Seminars are open to all L6 and U6 students on an optional, walk-in basis and are held in the Spring on **Tuesdays during long lunches**, both sides of the Easter term break.

Advice on Careers in the Armed Forces

6th Form pupils who are interested in learning about a career in the military, should attend a meeting with an Armed Forces Career Adviser from the **British Army, RAF, or Royal Navy/Royal Marines**, all of whom will be at Abingdon School on **Thursday, 30 November 2023**. You are also welcome to make an appointment for your child directly with an Armed Forces Career Adviser; email me for contact details.

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, appearing to read 'Michael Triff', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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