

The Sir John Colfox Academy



Inspiring Learning, Achieving Excellence

Headteacher: Mr Adam Shelley MEd, BSc Hons, PGCE, NPQH

18th May 2020

Dear Students and Parents,

I trust this letter finds you well, and that you continue to make progress with your remote learning. I will be in touch in the near future outlining our plans to provide you with face-to-face contact with your teachers during the summer term. In the meantime, please continue to work closely with your teachers and do not hesitate to contact me if you have any concerns. I have been hugely impressed by the resilience, initiative and motivation shown by our Year 12 students. The independent learning skills you are developing during this time will be incredibly useful when revising for A Levels and working at university level.

Usually, Year 12 have visited the annual UCAS fair by this stage in the academic year and would have begun to make plans for progression after A Levels to university and other pathways. With the current situation as it is, I have organised remote tutorials to help students prepare for applying to university (UCAS).

Students will shortly receive an invitation to attend a live TEAMS event hosted by the school with input from a leading university. Please make sure you are available to 'attend' these sessions, which have been organised to coincide with your usual timetabled tutorial sessions on Tuesdays:

9th June at 11am: *Introduction to UCAS*

16th June at 11 am: *Building your evidence towards writing an effective Personal Statement*

23rd June at 11 am: *UCAS apply – what's the process?*

30th June at 11 am: *How to write an effective Personal Statement*

These sessions will last approximately 40 minutes each.

A parents' guide is available on the Colfox website, and contains all the information you need. Simply click on 'Sixth Form' and navigate down to 'UCAS information'. Also included on this page is a Powerpoint that breaks the process down.

It is the policy of the Sixth Form for all students to register for UCAS, even if it is not their intention to progress on to higher education. This means that students will go through the process of researching higher education opportunities, helping them to make informed choices. Students will write a detailed 'personal statement', which is useful for other applications including apprenticeships and covering letters for potential employers. Finally, plans do change and registering and completing the process early is better than rushing the process later on.

Key dates:

21st May 2020 – the new UCAS cycle opens

Summer term, Year 12 students research options and write personal statements

October - December, Year 13 references written and applications finalised

15th October – deadline for Oxbridge, veterinary and medicine courses

15th January 2021 – UCAS cycle closes



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The process:

1. Students research and decide on courses and locations
2. Students set up UCAS accounts (they are responsible for usernames and passwords. These need to be written down)
3. Students write their personal statement
4. Applications made to 5 institutions (spread the 'risk factor' here)
5. References written
6. Payment of £24 (by card only)
7. Application sent
8. UCAS processes application
9. Offers made / interviews
10. Decisions made!

Key Information for UCAS Registration:

- . Website: <https://www.ucas.com>
- . Click on 'Sign In' (top right hand corner) – choose 'students'
- . Select **undergraduate** and choose **2021 entry**
- . Click on '**register**'
- . Make sure you register 'through school / college' when asked how you are applying at the end of the process
- . **Buzzword = SJCA21**
- . A personal ID will be generated. Write this down or screenshot the page

The most important element is deciding where to study and what to study. 95% of students in their first year of university say they wish they'd researched their courses in greater detail. The more research you do, the more focused the personal statement is. Key considerations are:

- distance from the family home (UCAS helps you search within a 'distance from home')
- whether to go for a campus or city university (there is a different 'feel')
- entry requirements
- availability of halls of residence (very helpful in the first year of university)
- level of tuition fee
- feedback from existing / previous students about quality of teaching / value for money, etc. (See www.whatuni.com)
- the average salary of graduates one year from completing courses.

The information on the school website contains all of these pointers and more, including useful websites and publications. I am available to discuss options at any time should you need more help deciding.

Please be aware that students are now expected to be making decisions, registering on UCAS and writing personal statements. The Joint Sixth Form expects personal statements to be completed (in first draft form) over the summer holiday.

Yours faithfully,



Adam Teasdale
Head of Sixth Form, Asst. Headteacher, Colfox Academy