



## **Information, Advice and Guidance**

### **For Year 11 Pupils and Parents**

Information, advice and guidance is a statutory element of each young person's curriculum. I hope this leaflet will provide a useful and comprehensive overview of where information can be sourced, timescales and contact information.

I hope you find it helpful.

Mr Larkin



October 2019

As a Year 11 pupil, it is important to be thinking about post 16 choices. We wish to encourage you to use all the resources available so you are equipped to make educated choices to start you on your chosen career pathway.

This year it will important to start preparing your **Record of Achievement File**. This will contain a Personal Statement, a Curriculum Vitae, examples of good work, achievements and certificates if appropriate. You can further this by discussing with your family and friends your achievements in and out of school and about where you would like to go after OLSJ. You need to know precise details of courses you are interested in, which providers offer them and the grades you need to gain entry to them. College and sixth form **prospectuses** can be found in the careers section of the library.

During Year 11 you will receive a careers interview with a careers advisor. Careers interviews help you to focus on your qualities, skills and interests and the thought processes of making well informed realistic decisions. The **National Careers Service** can also offer you lots of other information and advice via their website [www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk](http://www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk) or by telephoning an advisor on 0800 100 900. The area wide prospectus is available through [www.ucasprogress.com](http://www.ucasprogress.com) which allows you to search for courses in your locality. During school you have also used the STARTPROFILE website which is a good place to begin discussions about your future. I have put these links, and others, on our school website under the Careers tab which is on the About Us menu.

During the autumn term all the local colleges and sixth forms will be holding **open days and open evenings** – it is important to attend these days to get a feel for the establishment, meet the tutors and ask questions to find out if they have the right course for you. Please see further in this booklet for dates and times.

I have also scheduled in a day in the Autumn term for you to consider your options in detail. I have invited all our local colleges in to provide you with information about post 16 courses.

Good luck with planning for the next stage of your education, and ultimately, your career.

*A. Larkin*

Mr A. Larkin

---

# Our Lady & St John Catholic College

## What are my options at 16?

- A Levels
- Apprenticeship
- Vocational
- Job (with training)

### **A Levels**

A Levels are the traditional qualifications offered by schools and colleges. They're highly valued by universities and employers and focus on academic subjects, although some are work related.

Most pupils take four subjects in Year 12 initially and in Year 13 decide which to take through to complete A levels in. A levels are mostly assessed by written exams, although there is some coursework in some subjects like PE. In subjects like Art and Dance, practical skills are also assessed.

Each college and sixth form have differing GCSE requirements for entry – see each prospectus for the specific details. As a general rule most establishments will require at least 5 GCSEs at Level 5 or above (most including Maths and English), however some will request a higher level of attainment.

### **Apprenticeship**

This is a work-based learning programme which enables the apprentice to earn a wage, gain on-the-job experience whilst learning new skills which will lead to nationally recognised qualifications. Apprenticeships have no set duration as the time taken will depend on the ability of the apprentice and the employer's requirements. The minimum pay is £95 per week. However the most recent survey showed that on average an apprentice can earn £130 per week.

Most of the apprentice's time will be in employment as most training takes place on the job. However, off-the-job training can be completed on day release or over a number of days in a block; the amount of time is dependent on the type of apprenticeship.

## Vocational Qualifications

Vocational courses offer students a more practical programme, equipping students with skills that relate directly to job roles or industry. Emphasis is put on coursework rather than examinations. There are different types of vocational qualifications offered by a number of different awarding bodies.

Each college and sixth form has their own entry requirements for each course and these will be set out in their prospectus. However, I have put together a general guide for the requirements for each level.

Level	Example of qualifications	Example of entry requirements
Entry	Introductory course Basic skills course	No formal qualifications. Entry by interview.
Level 1 - Foundation	BTEC Introductory Diploma City & Guilds NVQ Level 1	No formal qualifications. Entry by interview.
Level 2 – Intermediate	BTEC First Diploma NVQ Level 2 GCSE Apprenticeship	GCSEs grade 1-4 or above
Level 3 – Advanced	BTEC National Diploma BTEC Extended Diploma NVQ Level 3 A Levels Advanced Apprenticeship	4 or 5 GCSEs at grade 4 or above
Level 4	Higher National Diploma Higher National Certificate NVQ Level 4 Foundation Degree Professional courses Higher Apprenticeship	A Levels Level 3 NVQ or Diploma

**Frequently asked questions by Year 11 pupils:**

**Q: Can I apply to more than one college or sixth form?**

**A:** Yes – it's advisable to apply to at least three places, so you have a back-up plan if you don't get the grades you need for your first choice.

**Q: Should I check up on times and dates of open days/evenings before going to any of them?**

**A:** Yes - look at the organisation's website; dates and times sometimes change.

**Q: How do I apply?**

**A:** Get application forms from the library or directly from the training provider.

**Q: Do I need my Progress File?**

**A:** Yes, send a copy of your Personal Statement with your application, it really helps the colleges to learn more about you and strengthens your application particularly for those courses which are popular and over-subscribed. Take your Progress File to interview, it highlights all your qualities and skills and helps you to sell yourself.

**Q: Do I have to be a Catholic to go to St. Mary's College?**

**A:** No, anyone can apply to St Mary's.

**Q: When should I apply?**

**A:** As soon as possible – early applicants get the most choice.

**Q: Are there any other colleges/ sixth forms?**

**A:** Yes, this booklet gives the main ones that our pupils have chosen in the past. The area-wide prospectus aims to inform you of every college and every course in Lancashire [www.ucasprogeess.co.uk](http://www.ucasprogeess.co.uk)

**Q: How can I book a Careers interview for unbiased information and guidance?**

**A:** See Mr Larkin

## Post 16 application forms

It is good practice for you to photocopy your application form and write out a rough copy first. Make sure you read the instructions carefully. If you are asked to use a black pen make sure you use a black pen! A scruffy application form with errors and crossings out does not give a good impression. Double check all the details on the form are correct and check your spelling and grammar before you copy them out in neat legible handwriting on the original application form.

I recommend that personal statements are sent with application forms. A personal statement will strengthen your application and highlight your achievements.

Use **ONE** side of A4 paper 3 Paragraphs Font Tahoma Font size 12

Please see below an outline of a personal statement which you may use for guidance.

### **Personal Statement** **Your full name**

**1. Your achievements in school**

What subjects you are taking, pupil voice, school teams, school events, trips, helping out at school events.

**2. Your achievements out of school**

What clubs do you belong to, your hobbies, helping out at home, part-time jobs, church.

**3. Your special skills**

IT skills – Word, Excel, Power point, good listener, good communicator, leadership qualities, motivator, helpful, flexible, work on your own initiative, numeracy skills, creative.

# College interview hints and tips

## 1. First impressions last

Greet your interviewer with a smile and a firm handshake. Give eye contact.

## 2. Be prepared

Take your Progress File with you to your interview. Additional information such as an Art & Design portfolio will also support your application process for relevant courses. Find out information about the college from their website beforehand.

## 3. Be confident

Listen carefully to the questions and answer properly. Don't waffle – take your time to gather your thoughts. It's better to say you need a minute to think about your answer rather than speak instantly and regret it afterwards.

## 4. Why should you be on the course?

All interviewers are looking for the right person for the right course. Be prepared to talk about your knowledge, experience, abilities and skills in this subject area.

## 5. Be positive

Your interviewer will be thinking about what it would be like to have you on their course, so they won't want to hear negative comments or lack of enthusiasm. Interviewers like to see someone who enjoys a challenge and is enthusiastic.

## 6. Body language

It's not what you say but how you say it. During the interview don't slouch, lean back, fold your arms or look down. Sit upright, make eye contact, use your hands and lean forward when making a point.

## 7. Develop rapport

Show energy, a sense of humour and smile.

## 8. Clarify anything you are unsure of

If you are not certain what is meant by a particular question, ask for clarification.

## 9. Remember your manners

Be polite at the interview; this will be noted and remembered.

## **Questions you may be asked at interview:**

### **What are your predicted grades?**

Take your predicted grades, estimated grades, mock exam results or already achieved grades to your interview. The interviewer will wish to see if you meet the entry requirements for the course you are applying for.

### **Why do you want to do this course?**

Interviewers use this question to see if you have done your homework and thought about your future. Do you really want to do this course?

### **What are your strengths?**

This is your chance to say what makes you stand out from the next person.

### **What work experience have you done?**

Some of you may have a part-time job or done some voluntary work. You may discuss areas of this experience that you enjoyed and how much you learned. This will demonstrate to the interviewer that you have a good work ethos.

### **Describe a problem you have faced and how you solved it.**

This is a tough question that is common in interviews. Interviewers are looking for your critical thinking skills and to ascertain if you can formulate solutions.

### **Tell me about yourself**

The interviewer is trying to figure you out professionally. Pick a couple of points about yourself, in relation to what you want to do in the future. The interviewer will not wish to know what games console you use and that you hang around with your mates.

## **Questions you may wish to ask at interview:**

### **What enhancement courses are available?**

**(e.g. volunteering projects, first aid, Duke of Edinburgh)**

This tells the interviewer that you are interested in extra courses within the college and want to have the opportunity to explore different activities.

### **What is the dress code?**

Different colleges and training providers will have different views on appropriate dress wear. Different courses may require overalls or uniforms for example motor vehicles.

### **Is there a full induction onto the course and the college?**

Inductions onto courses are always important, making sure Health & Safety issues are covered to ensure that your time spent at college is safe and enjoyable.

### **What can this course lead to?**

It is important to know what options are available to you after the course so you may know your progression route to reach your career goals.

### **How am I assessed?**

Will there be exams? When are the exams? Is the course work assessed during the year or assessed at the end?

### **How many hours will I be at college and how many hours self-supported study will I be expected to do?**

What will my timetable be like? How much extra work will I have to do at home?

### **May I contact you if I have further questions?**

It's always good to end an interview with this question. It keeps the door open for future communication.

# Open Events

 <a href="http://www.accross.ac.uk">www.accross.ac.uk</a>	01254 389933	<b>FULL College Event (inc Apprenticeships)</b> Tuesday 24th September Wednesday 16th October Wednesday 13th November Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> February 2020	5:30 pm – 7:30 pm
 <a href="http://www.blackburn.ac.uk">www.blackburn.ac.uk</a>	01254 292929	<b>FULL College Event - A levels / BTECs / Vocational &amp; Apprenticeships</b> Thursday 3rd October Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> October Saturday 9 <sup>th</sup> November (10.00am – 1.00pm) Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup> February 2020 Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> June 2020	4.30 – 8.00 pm <i>with exception of</i> <b>*Sat which is 10am – 1.00 pm</b>
 <a href="http://www.burnley.ac.uk">www.burnley.ac.uk</a>	01282 733373	<b>Sixth Form &amp; Vocational Courses</b> Wednesday 25th September Tuesday 8th October Thursday 7th November Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> January 2020 <b>Themis Apprenticeship Open Events:</b> Wednesday 29th January 2020	All events: 5.30 – 8.00 pm
 <a href="http://www.cardinalnewman.ac.uk">www.cardinalnewman.ac.uk</a>	01772 460181	Saturday 12th October Saturday 16th Nov Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> Feb 2020  <b>Deadline for Applications 10 Feb 2020</b>	<b>PLEASE NOTE:</b> <b>ALL</b> Open Events are on Saturdays – none on week days :  10 am – 1pm
 Clitheroe Royal Grammar School <small>Founded in 1554</small> <a href="http://www.crgs.org.uk/sixth-form/welcome/">www.crgs.org.uk/sixth-form/welcome/</a>	01200 423118	Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> November <b>Applications in by preferably Friday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2020</b>	5.30 – 8.00 pm
 <a href="http://www.daca.uk.com">www.daca.uk.com</a>	01254 819500	Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> November	5 – 7 pm
 <a href="http://www.daestudio.biz">www.daestudio.biz</a>	01254 819567	Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> November	6 – 8 pm

# Open Events

 <p><b>Myerscough College</b></p>	01995 642222	<p><b>Main Campus &amp; Witton Park Blackburn Centre</b>  <b>ALL events - Saturdays</b>  <b>7th September</b>  <b>5th October</b>  <b>9th November</b>  <b>7th December</b></p> <p><b>Recommended applications by 31 March</b></p>	<p><b>Main Campus: &amp; Witton Park Blackburn:</b>  <b>ALL Saturdays</b>          10 am – 12:30 pm</p>
<p><b>PRESTON'S COLLEGE</b>  <a href="http://www.preston.ac.uk">www.preston.ac.uk</a></p>	01772 225522	<p>Tuesday 1st October          Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November (10am to 2pm)          Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020</p> <p><b>Recommended applications by 31 March</b></p>	<p>Evening times          4.00–7.30 pm  <b>Saturday times</b>          10 am – 2pm</p>
	01254 686300	Tuesday 24th September	5 – 8 pm
<p><b>RUNSHAW COLLEGE</b>  <a href="http://www.runshaw.ac.uk">www.runshaw.ac.uk</a></p>	01772 622677	<p><b>Full College Open Events</b>          Saturday 21st Sept (11am – 3pm)          Thursday 10th October          Tuesday 19th November          Wednesday 4th March 2020  <b>Application deadline 1<sup>st</sup> April</b></p>	<p><b>Saturday - 11 am – 3 pm</b>  <b>Evenings - 4.00 - 8.00pm</b></p>
 <p><a href="http://www.stmarysblackburn.ac.uk">www.stmarysblackburn.ac.uk</a></p>	01254 580464	<p>Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> September          Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November (10 am – 1pm)          Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2020</p> <p><b>Early applications encouraged - preferably by early December</b></p>	<p><b>Evening Events 6.00 pm – 8 pm</b>  <b>Saturday is 10 am to 1pm</b></p>
 <p><b>St Wilfrid's</b>          Church of England Academy  <a href="http://www.saintwilfrids.co.uk">www.saintwilfrids.co.uk</a></p>	01254 604000	Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> November	5 – 7pm
 <p>Tauheedul Girls  <a href="http://www.tighs.com">www.tighs.com</a></p>	01254 54021	Thursday 14th November	4.30 – 7 pm
 <p>Tauheedul Boys  <a href="http://www.tibhs.com">www.tibhs.com</a></p>	01254 918670	Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> November	5pm – 7:30 pm