

# Blessed George Napier

## Catholic School and Sixth Form

*'Compassion, Truth, Service, Forgiveness, Respect'*



### Your Options After Sixth Form

Whatever you choose to do, it has to be right for you and be the beginnings of the rest of your career path. We hope that the details in this handout will be useful in helping you to explore the options available to you and begin to plan your next steps.

Your options for the end of Year 13 are limitless! You could:

- ◆ Go straight on to Higher Education.
- ◆ Start on a Foundation Degree
- ◆ Choose a Degree with Masters
- ◆ Choose a Degree with a sandwich year abroad/ in the workplace.
- ◆ Defer your entry into Higher Education—whilst you do something else.
- ◆ Begin an apprenticeship at Level 3 or a Degree apprenticeship.
- ◆ Find a job—ideally with training.
- ◆ Take a Gap Year.
- ◆ Fundraise.
- ◆ Volunteer.
- ◆ Undertake work experience.

The only thing you should not do, is nothing!

We are here to advise and support you in your preparation and will obviously provide references for UCAS and employers; but the research, planning and application process is your responsibility. If you would like to discuss anything further then please email us at the addresses given below.

- ◆ Sarah O'Donnell, Assistant Head, Head of Sixth Form
  - ◆ [SO'Donnell@bgn.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:SO'Donnell@bgn.oxon.sch.uk)
- ◆ Margaret Ellul, Assistant Learning Leader KS5
  - ◆ [mell8376@bgn.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:mell8376@bgn.oxon.sch.uk)
- ◆ Wayne Thornton, Assistant Learning Leader KS5
  - ◆ [wtho0370@bgn.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:wtho0370@bgn.oxon.sch.uk)

There are over **50,000 undergraduate courses** at more than 395 Higher Education providers in the UK, so it's important you do your research and start narrowing them down! We will be using <https://www.unifrog.org/> to help you do this. In addition you can:

- ◆ Go on line and order **prospectuses**, find out what they offer and what you need to achieve to be offered a place.
- ◆ Find out what the **entry requirements** are for the courses you would like to study and focus on your preparation for your A-level exams.
- ◆ Look to see when their **open days** are and visit them (virtual at this time). Think about whether you would like to spend at least three years studying and living there.
- ◆ Book online University **Taster Days** to see if you like the way the your subject is delivered.

## What is the ‘Russell Group of Universities’?

The Russell Group of universities consists of the 24 leading UK universities which are committed to maintaining the best research, outstanding teaching and learning experience and unrivalled links with business and the public sector. For more information on these particular universities visit [www.russellgroup.ac.uk](http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk)

## How Do I Arrange My Student Finance?

Students now have to pay tuition fees which can be as much as £9,250 per year, as well as their living costs and expenses. Loans are available from the government through an agency called ‘Student Finance England’ and it is the students’ responsibility to apply for this themselves directly.

Loans are not paid back until you have graduated and are earning over £27,295 a year. Bursaries are also available to certain students and do not have to be paid back. For more information on Student Finance visit [www.gov.uk/student-finance](http://www.gov.uk/student-finance)

## What is the UCAS Tariff?

Some Universities make entry offers using points rather than grades this is called the UCAS Tariff. The amount of points required for courses varies depending on the course and the provider. Each A level grade equals a certain number of points. Additional points are also available for music grades and other qualifications. Further details can be found at <https://www.ucas.com>.

| Grade | UCAS points at A-level | UCAS points at AS | BTEC Grade | UCAS points | EP Grade | UCAS points |
|-------|------------------------|-------------------|------------|-------------|----------|-------------|
| A*    | 56                     |                   | D*         | 56          | A*       | 28          |
| A     | 48                     | 20                | D          | 48          | A        | 24          |
| B     | 40                     | 16                |            |             | B        | 20          |
| C     | 32                     | 12                | M          | 32          | C        | 16          |
| D     | 24                     | 10                |            |             | D        | 12          |
| E     | 16                     | 6                 | P          | 16          | E        | 8           |

## How Do I Write a Personal Statement?

### What is a Personal Statement?

Your 'Personal Statement' could be the most important 4,000 characters, 47 lines you ever write! It is your only chance to persuade the universities to choose you! It is what the admission tutors look at to distinguish between applicants with similar qualifications. You need to demonstrate that you not only want to do that course, but that you are the right person for them to offer a place to! Some courses have thousands of applications for very few places. You need to ensure that you stand out. A very useful website with guidelines for different subjects is:

<https://university.which.co.uk/advice/personal-statements/personal-statement-subject-guides-admission-tutor-tips>

About 70% of your personal statement should be on why you want to study the course and the remaining 30% should be on your skills and experience. Super-curricular independent learning about your chosen subject may include independent reading, online learning, attending lectures and listening to podcasts. How will you show that you have the qualities they want for the course? How will you show. What have you done which demonstrates you have transferable skills such as independence, leadership, organisation, taking responsibility? Does your work experience show your full potential? Could you undertake voluntary work in school or in your own time to demonstrate your commitment and sense of responsibility?

In addition to your Personal Statement, your UCAS form will include a reference written by your subject teachers and tutor which will highlight your strengths: academic and more general, as well as predicted A Level grades.

## How Do I Write a CV?

'**Curriculum Vitae**', commonly abbreviated to CV, can be literally translated as 'course of life'. It's a summary of your career history that is often the first phase in getting yourself noticed by potential employers. When employers have a vacancy they need to fill they will put together a person specification; a list of the skills and experience they want the ideal candidate to possess. From this list, the job advert is created, which is where they will ask you to send them your CV. How closely your CV matches the person specification is the key factor in determining whether they see you as a suitable person to join their company.

Unlike an application form, a CV allows you to decide which information is most relevant to each role you apply for. It needs to be:

- ◆ **concise, accurate, engaging, thorough**

It is your personal advertising campaign and like any advert, you should use your CV as an opportunity to sell. You want to sell your skills, your qualifications, your experience and your ability to do the job. Advertising is all about attracting attention and appealing to the needs of the buyer so highlight your strengths and achievements to interest the recruiter. At your stage in life you cannot demonstrate a long career history, but you refer to part time work, voluntary, extra curricular commitments, explaining how the experiences you've gained during these will help you in your future career. Every CV should include the following sections:

- ◆ **Personal details, Education, Experience, Skills**

Once written you should aim to keep your CV up-to-date.

## Higher Education Key Terms

**ACADEMIC SCHOOLS**—Subject departments in a university. Sometimes called faculties.

**ACADEMIC YEAR**—The university year which usually runs from September to May/June.

**ACCESS COURSES**—Designed to prepare students for higher education and usually run by local colleges.

**ADJUSTMENT**—Upgrading university choice when results exceed expectations – a 5 day window.

**ADMISSIONS OFFICE**—The university department that processes applications and advises students on suitability of qualifications for degree courses.

**BACHELOR'S DEGREE**—The qualification studied towards as an undergraduate, also known as a first degree or undergraduate degree. Can be a Bachelor of Arts or BA (generally associated with humanities, arts, language and social science subjects), a Bachelor of Science or BSc (for courses in science, technology and some business and social science subjects), a Bachelor of Engineering (BEng), Pharmacy (BPharm), Music (BMus) or a Bachelor of Law (LLB).

**BURSARY**—Non-repayable financial support for eligible students available from universities.

**CLEARING**—A period in August (after exam results are released) when late applications can be submitted.

**COMBINED/JOINT HONOURS**—A degree in which a student combines two different subjects that may or may not be related.

**DEFERRED ENTRY**—Application for a university place (through UCAS) more than one year before you intend to start the course.

**DEGREE**—A qualification awarded by a university after a satisfactory level has been achieved.

**DEGREE APPRENTICESHIP**—a degree as an integral part of the apprenticeship, co-designed by employers to make sure it is relevant for the skills industry is looking for. The cost of course fees is shared between government and employers, meaning no cost to you.

**DISSERTATION/RESEARCH PROJECT**—An extended essay or report (8,000-12,000 words) on a specific subject area, written in the final year of an undergraduate honours degree course.

**EXTENDED DEGREE**—A degree that includes a one-year foundation stage leading directly to Stage 1.

**FOUNDATION COURSE/YEAR**—A one year course that is taken prior to commencing an undergraduate degree to bring students up to the required academic standard. Usually completed if you have not taken the correct subjects at Level 3, or if you have not achieved the correct grades.

**FOUNDATION DEGREE**—A qualification which combines work-based learning with academic study. The course is equivalent to the first two years of a Bachelors degree and can be topped up to gain an honours degree. This may be similar to HNC and HND qualifications taught for Apprenticeships.

**FRESHERS**-New university students. A fresher's week may be organised to enrol you on your course and introduce you to university life. This can include social events, society airs, and introductions to the library and computer resources.

**FURTHER EDUCATION (FE)**-Studying A-levels/AS, BTECs or an access course are some examples of qualifications studied at FE level.

**GAP YEAR**-A year out of study usually taken between school/college and university. Students often travel, study or work to gain experience and save money for university.

**GRADUATE**-Someone who has successfully completed a higher education qualification.

**HIGHER EDUCATION (HE)**-Study beyond A-level, including higher national certificates (HNC) and diplomas (HND), foundation degrees, undergraduate degrees and postgraduate degrees.

**HE MAINTENANCE LOAN:** Repayable financial support from the government available to eligible students to help with living costs at university.

**HIGHER NATIONAL CERTIFICATES/DIPLOMAS (HNC/HND)**-These are two-year practical courses. Students who successfully complete these courses may progress onto an appropriate undergraduate degree.

**Honours (HONS)**-Degree with honours—this is a full undergraduate degree, usually requiring the completion of a dissertation or research project.

**JOINT HONOURS**-Two subjects studied as part of a degree in roughly equal proportions.

**OFFER**-An offer of a place on a course at university—this may be a conditional offer, dependent on your Level 3 results, or an unconditional offer.

**PROSPECTUS**-A guide to a university with information on courses, facilities and student services.

**SANDWICH COURSE**-An undergraduate degree that includes a work-placement or study abroad year.

**SCHOLARSHIP**-A non-repayable grant awarded to a student based on a range of criteria. This varies greatly between each institution. Scholarships are frequently awarded for merit. Regional scholarships are also being offered by some institutions to local schools/colleges.

**SINGLE HONOURS**-An undergraduate degree focusing on one subject area (or group of related subject areas).

**TARIFF SYSTEM**-Designed to help students calculate whether they meet course entry requirements. A tariff calculator is available on the UCAS website.

[www.ucas.com/students/ucas\\_tariff](http://www.ucas.com/students/ucas_tariff).

**TUITION FEE**-The cost payable for tuition.

**UCAS**-University and College Admissions Service—administers all full-time higher education applications.

**UNDERGRADUATE**-Someone who is studying for a degree.

## Timeline for Applications for Further Education

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <b>June-July</b>                 | Register with UCAS Hub online and start working on Personal Statements. Attend universities open days.   |
| <b>September</b>                 | Any completed UCAS applications may be sent to UCAS.   |
| <b>15th October</b>              | Deadline for Oxbridge applications and all degrees in Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Sciences.   |
| <b>October-December</b>          | Deadline for students to complete their section of the UCAS form—including Personal Statement—and 'pay/send' to UCAS/BGN. Tutors write references. |
| <b>Last Wednesday in January</b> | BGN submits final applications to UCAS; offers made by your university. Your 'track' will show your reply date.                                    |
| <b>May-June</b>                  | Students confirm firm and insurance choices.   |
| <b>Feb-May</b>                   | Apply to Student Finance England by May.   |
| <b>August</b>                    | A Level Results Day. Clearing and Adjustment open.   |

## Top 10 Subjects for Graduate Employability

In a recent article on Coursefindr.co.uk, the following subjects were found to be the most employable.

1. **Medicine and Dentistry**
2. **Veterinary Science**
3. **Subjects allied to Medicine**
4. **Architecture, Building and Planning**
5. **Education**
6. **Engineering & Technology**
7. **Computer Science**
8. **Mathematical Sciences**
9. **Business studies**
10. **Law**

<https://coursefindr.co.uk/articles/top-ten-employable-degrees/>

## What is an Apprenticeship?

**When you start work as an apprentice you are in a real job.**

An Apprenticeship is a real job with training so you can earn while you learn and achieve nationally recognized qualifications as you go. Apprenticeships usually take between one and four years to complete and cover 1500 job roles in a wide range of industries, from things like engineering to finance advice, veterinary nursing to accountancy. With Level three qualifications you can expect to start on an Advanced Apprenticeship.

### **Key benefits:**

- ◆ Earning a salary
- ◆ Training in the skills employers want
- ◆ Excellent progression opportunities, whether looking to study further or climb the ranks within the workplace
- ◆ Increased future earning potential. Apprentices enjoy marked salary increases when they complete their training
- ◆ Better long term salary prospects (those with an Advanced Apprenticeship earn around £117,000\*\* more than those without, over the course of their career)
- ◆ Learning at a pace suited to the individual with the support of a mentor
- ◆ Paid holiday

**Apprenticeships are available in an increasing range of areas such as:**

- ◆ Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care
- ◆ Arts, Media and Publishing
- ◆ Business, Administration and Law
- ◆ Construction, Planning and the Built Environment
- ◆ Education and Training
- ◆ Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies
- ◆ Health, Public Services and Care
- ◆ Information and Communication Technology
- ◆ Leisure, Travel and Tourism
- ◆ Retail and Commercial Enterprise

For more information log on to <http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/>

**Degree Apprenticeships** bring together the best of higher and vocational training. This newer option enables university study and the invaluable on-the-job training typical of an **Apprenticeship**, without having to cover the cost of tuition.

Degree apprenticeships were launched in September 2015 and the programme has grown to around 6,000 apprentices. They are similar to higher apprenticeships, but differ in that they provide an opportunity to gain a full bachelor's (Level 6) or master's degree (Level 7).

For more information log on to <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/apprenticeships/degree-apprenticeships>

## Useful Websites

<https://www.unifrog.org/> Helps you to find the best course or apprenticeship for you

[www.notgoingtouni.co.uk](http://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk) Help with apprenticeships; work experience; college courses—anything but universities!

[Unipodadvice.com](http://Unipodadvice.com) Gives help on types of degrees; applying to university; arranging finance; choosing courses; choosing a university—all very brief, clear and up to date, it also has a section for parents!

[www.university.which.co.uk](http://www.university.which.co.uk) Helps you to find the course to suit you and will let you compare courses to see which might be best for you.

[www.opendays.com](http://www.opendays.com) Lists all university open days. Put them on your calendar! Go to them!

[www.universitytasterdays.com](http://www.universitytasterdays.com) As opendays.com

[www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk](http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk) Includes the league tables for the universities and offers guidance on choosing the right course for you.

[www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) It will tell you the details of and entry requirements for all courses.

[www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk) Includes details on current apprenticeships.

[www.push.co.uk](http://www.push.co.uk) An independent, alternative guide to universities; gap years; open days and student finance.

[Future-talent.com/gjs/alternatives-to-university-guide.jsp](http://Future-talent.com/gjs/alternatives-to-university-guide.jsp)

[www.futurelearn.com](http://www.futurelearn.com) Online learning site for super-curricular independent learning.

[www.icould.com](http://www.icould.com) Video clips on job descriptions

<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/> Job descriptions

[www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/apprenticeships/degree-apprenticeships](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/apprenticeships/degree-apprenticeships)

Degree-Apprenticeships website

**Gap Years:**      [www.yearoutgroup.org](http://www.yearoutgroup.org);      [www.gapyear.com](http://www.gapyear.com);      [www.gap-year.com](http://www.gap-year.com)

<http://www.ardmoreeducationaltravel.co.uk/>

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