

June 2010

## **Preparation for application to Higher Education – notes for parents of Year 12 girls**

*Requirements for application to Higher Education change every year. This is why the individual advice offered to each girl is particularly important. Much of the information is published by universities on websites, and this means that instead of appearing in a yearly published prospectus, the information may be updated frequently and must be consulted regularly. Information about Admission Tests, specific grade requirements, interviews and suitable items for inclusion in a personal statement may be included in a website.*

*The tutors follow the progress of each girl with close attention, from the stage when she is considering her choices, through the completion of her UCAS application, her preparation for interview and then her final decision about which offers she should accept.*

*This is a brief summary of the help and guidance that the girls receive during the time they are making plans for the future, and preparing to apply for Higher Education. Throughout this process each girl is encouraged to discuss her plans with her teachers, Heads of Department, and her tutor, who will always be on hand to advise and help her through this important period of her school life.*

*Please contact me if you would like to discuss any aspect of this programme.*

Vikki Askew

### **General Information**

Open days for universities and subject departments of universities occur throughout the year. Many of them occur at weekends and holidays. We encourage the girls to take advantage of these but we suggest that they miss no more than two school days for open days which occur during school time. Booking for open days is usually made online by your daughter, who must tell her tutor and Mrs Allan in the Sixth Form Office what she has arranged.

Our former pupils are valued assets. Informal meetings are arranged between the present Sixth Formers and Alumnae who are able to give the girls an insight into a variety of careers.

After the AS examinations, the girls are given an explanation of the UCAS application process. They are given guidance about writing a personal statement and filling in the UCAS form. Anyone who has decided not to apply to university at this stage will be helped to plan her GAP year. The school will provide any references required. Anyone who applies post-A level will be given as much help as if she were still at school.

The girls have been given the information contained in this booklet during the introductory UCAS talk which took place on 21 June.

By the end of this summer term, all Year 12 girls will have prepared drafts of their personal statements and submitted them to their tutors. This is an important element of the UCAS application form. All girls will do this even if they are not intending to apply to University in the current session, for example, if they are planning to take a GAP year or go on to a Foundation Art course.

Tutors discuss the statements with the girls, and final versions are prepared by the girls. The girls discuss their choice of course and universities with their tutors and teachers. Each subject department has a nominated teacher who has expertise on university courses. If anyone is intending to apply to Oxford or Cambridge she will discuss her choice of college with her tutor, teachers and the Head of Sixth Form.

## **Autumn Term 2010**

At the beginning of the Autumn Term the UCAS forms are completed. This is done via the Internet. The girls will be shown how to do this. (Girls who apply for Cambridge, Oxford, Medicine or Veterinary medicine have a very early deadline for their applications). During the year the Art Department help girls prepare their applications to Art School. The Drama Department and the Music Department help girls to prepare for specialist courses in these subjects.

UCAS applications are checked and are sent off by the school.

Cambridge University requires a supplementary form to be completed online shortly after they have applied through UCAS. Girls are helped to do this.

Applicants to some courses at Oxford and Cambridge are asked to submit written work prior to interview. Girls are helped to choose appropriate work, and this is sent off by the Sixth Form Office.

Applicants for some courses are required to take a test as part of the admissions procedure. Notes on these Admissions Tests are appended.

Each girl will be given a chance to have a mock interview given by someone who is eminent in her chosen subject. University interviews may take place any time from September to March, or even later. Universities (and even departments within the same university) vary in their interview schedules and the time they take to offer places.

When all the institutions to which a girl has applied have made a decision, UCAS will write to her to ask her to decide which places she will accept. She is asked to decide on a 'firm' place (i.e. her first choice) and an insurance offer.

While your daughter is waiting to be notified of decisions by post, she will be able to access a secure UCAS website using a personal password. This will give her up to date information about her application.

Each year we have girls who make an application to American universities, or universities which are not in the United Kingdom. These forms of application vary very much between institutions so it is not appropriate to generalise but specialist help is provided by Ms Harrison.

## **GAP Year**

Each year many girls decide to take a Gap year before University. If a girl decides to do this her UCAS application may be completed in two ways –

- 1) Deferred entry – UCAS form is completed in September 2010 for 2012 entry. *NB If a girl plans to take a GAP year we will usually advise her not to apply now but to apply after her A level results*
- 2) Application after the A level results (Members of staff will be in school when the A level results are published and will help girls with their application). A girl gets as much help after her A level results as she does while she is still at school.

We will help a girl to plan her GAP year – the school has a great deal of information on various projects that she may like to undertake.

## **Useful websites**

<http://www.ucas.ac.uk/parents/>

<http://www.opendays.com/>

### **UCAS deadlines 2010 for the girls**

**Tuesday, 22 June** – Pupils should have registered with UCAS via UCAS Apply

**Friday, 25 June** - First draft of self-profile to tutors

**Friday, 3 September** - Updated draft of self-profile to tutor.

**Friday, 10 September** - Completed UCAS forms for Medics, Vets and Oxford and Cambridge applicants.

**Monday, 20 September** - All other completed UCAS forms to tutor.

**Thursday, 4 November** – Marked written work and completed cover sheets for Oxford should be handed in to the Sixth Form Office by the end of the school day.

***Please note that this process takes some time. The UCAS forms have to be carefully checked and validated, references have to be written and approved. These procedures have to take place after a girl has finally submitted her form and may take several days.***