



Contact details

Careers Manager

Mr Nick Oakhill

noakhill@soham-college.org.uk

Careers Adviser

Mrs Julie Anderson

janderson@soham-college.org.uk

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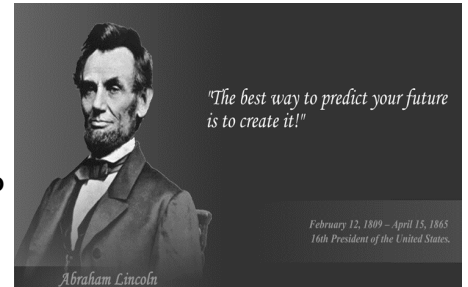
Spring 2024

Welcome to the termly Soham Village College Careers Newsletter. This goes out to all SVC staff, parents, the governing body, selected local businesses and other stakeholders.

Careers education is a fundamental part of preparing students for their future. The SVC careers programme is fully inclusive of all students, and is constantly monitored and evaluated to ensure it meets the needs of everyone.

We hope that you continue to find this newsletter useful and interesting.

If you have any feedback on what you have read or have items you wish us to include in future editions, please let us know.



The Gatsby Benchmarks



The Gatsby Benchmarks provide a national framework around which schools can develop and improve their careers programme. We are working hard towards adopting all of the benchmarks, and have made good progress with Benchmarks 1,3,4,5,7 & 8 fully achieved.

This is far from being simply a tick-box exercise to meet government expectations — research has shown that the Benchmarks have been proven to raise students' aspirations and make them as work-ready as they can possibly be.

1. A stable careers programme	100% (100%)
2. Learning from career and labour market information	80% (80%)
3. Addressing the needs of each student	100% (90%)
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers	100% (100%)
5. Encounters with employers and employees	100% (100%)
6. Experiences of workplaces	75% (50%)
7. Encounters with further and higher education	100% (95%)
8. Personal guidance	100% (100%)

(figures in brackets = previous attainment level. Audit carried out every Nov, Mar and June)



A parents' toolkit for career conversations

It has long been acknowledged that the most influential people in a young person's life are their parents or carers, and that many of the ideas related to their careers and future are formulated in their early school years and through conversations with family members.

Talking Futures is a recently released suite of resources, designed to help schools support parents to have informed and constructive careers and education conversations with their children.

The website is full of useful information and guidance on the various pathways available. There are loads of helpful conversation starting points to help parents approach the subject with their children, which can be the trickiest part. The earlier these conversations take place, the more informed and prepared students are when they reach Year 11.

Visit the site at <https://www.talkingfutures.org.uk/> and make it your go-to website for up-to-date information!

Careers Website

<https://www.sohamvc.org/post16careers>

The section is always kept as up-to-date as possible, and is a great source of information across many aspects of Careers Education. There are some links to key websites that you are encouraged to visit.

We would also encourage students to regularly access and use the website so please take time to talk to your child about it.

Careers Policy, Strategy and Programme

All schools have a statutory requirement to publish their policy, strategy and programme.

All three publications can be found on the Careers section of the school website:

Policy - this is our guiding principle and determines what should be done at the top level. It is approved by the Advisory Board and reviewed every 3 years

Strategy - this is our comprehensive plan which helps to shape what we do and provide more detail and structure. It is a flexible plan and is reviewed every year

Programme - this is the detail behind the strategy that highlights the key activities through the year. It is not an exhaustive list and is updated annually but it gives a good flavour of what the Careers Team deliver

Please take the opportunity to glance at these documents as they all provide a good insight into what we do and why we do it.

Transitioning into Work



Attitudes & behaviours

- Accountability
- Time management
- Reputation
- Phone use



Interview readiness

- Confidence
- Virtual
- Alternative methods
- Understanding of the employer and future roles



Relationships

- Feedback
- Teamwork
- Initiative and comms with employers
- Individuality

The school's careers programme includes lots of focus on the workplace and helping prepare students for when they move into employment. This ranges from practical support such as CV writing and mock interviews, to more seemingly mundane matters such as employment rights and how to read a pay slip.

Some students already have part time jobs which gives them the solid foundations usually required in later life, such as time keeping, communication, organisational skills and showing enthusiasm for the job.

Students are constantly being told that first impressions count, be that in the content of their CV, a job interview, or their first day at college or in a job. Attitude and behaviour, as well as self-awareness, are key attributes that can be discussed very easily but they are more tricky to actually teach. We all know these qualities take time to develop and so it is hoped that by actively engaging in these parts of the careers programme, students have a level of awareness of these and make those first impressions really positive ones.

One aspect that students often get anxious about is that they feel a lack of work experience means they will be unsuccessful when applying for their first job, or even apply to college. Whilst any sort of work experience or volunteering does certainly help and can make a student stand out from the crowd, it is not a deal-breaker when it comes to assessing the value and suitability of a student for that job or course. Sometimes a student's personal circumstances means that work experience isn't an option at that stage of their life, but they shouldn't see that as a negative thing and should instead find other positive aspects of their life they can talk about.

Above all, young people should realise that they will make mistakes in the early stages of their careers. Provided they acknowledge them and learn from these, then they are a valuable part of their early careers development and should not be feared.

(thanks to Tony from the Travis Perkins Early Careers team for the inspiration for this article)

INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT

GETTING INTO: ENGINEERING



When students declare an interest in an engineering course or career, they often struggle to then say what field of engineering they might want to specialise in. This is not surprising, considering the many different types of engineer they can become.

If the National Careers Service website is used to search for 'engineer' under their Explore Careers search bar, you will see over 200 specific roles!! This is why research is the key when it comes to engineering!!

This is an excellent starting point <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/search-results?searchTerm=engineer>

The word engineer comes from the Latin work meaning 'cleverness'

Engineering, by definition, is the application of science to the optimum conversion of natural resources to the uses of humankind

Engineering is based mainly on the principles of physics, chemistry and maths. Other related subjects include history, design & technology, geography and ICT.

Key Skills required:

Problem solving	Computer science
Teamwork	Creativity
Communication	Attention to Detail
Leadership	
Pressure management	
Technical knowledge	

Due to the diversity of engineering roles, there is not one specific route into the industry. Career prospects can be improved by following any one or a combination of these routes—college courses (L1 to L3 BTEC Certificates and Diplomas), A levels, T levels, engineering degrees, apprenticeships and work placements/internships.

Whilst an engineering degree may secure a job with a large national engineering company with potential to develop and rise quickly, an equally successful route could be an apprenticeship. This enables students to learn whilst they earn, and potentially guarantee a permanent role with the company at the end.

Regardless of which route taken, a passion and understanding of maths and physics is required, as well as good grades in these subjects. Budding chemical engineers should achieve good chemistry grades.

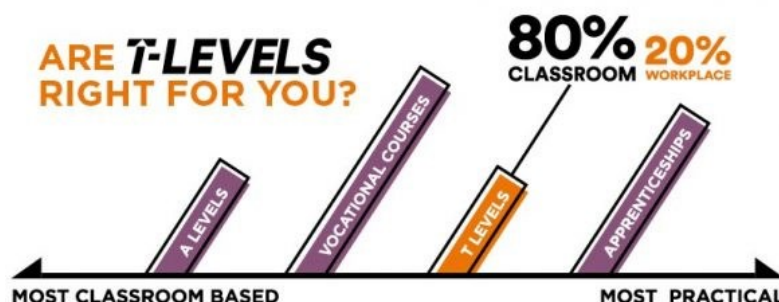
Work experience is always useful but not absolutely necessary. More importantly is the ability to show a passion for engineering topics and to keep up-to-date with engineering related matters, nationally and globally.

As always, research is the key. Here are some good starting points:

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors/engineering-and-manufacturing/how-to-become-an-engineer>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z7n4bdm#z2dx6g8>

T Levels



T Levels were introduced as a Post 16 qualification option in September 2020. The range of subjects has expanded each year, with now over 20 subject available.

What are they?

- Equivalent to 3 A levels
- Developed in collaboration with employers and businesses, so content meets industry needs
- A mix of classroom learning and 'on-the-job' experience (approx. 45 days total)

What subjects do they cover? (not all colleges offer these yet)

- Agriculture, Environmental and Animal Care; Business; Catering and Hospitality; Construction; Creative and Design; Digital; Education and Early Years; Engineering and Manufacturing; Hair and Beauty; Health and Science; Legal, Finance and Accounting; Sales, Marketing and Procurement

How do they differ to current vocational courses and apprenticeships?

- Directly linked to future employment opportunities
- Much more hands on
- Scenario based teaching
- Learning employability skills
- Different assessment styles (not just exams based)

Who are they aimed at?

- Students who have a specific career in mind
- Students who enjoy practical work
- Students who struggle with exams
- Students who may not know if they want to go onto university or apprenticeship

Entry requirements

- 5 GCSEs at grade 4-9, including Science (5), Maths (5), and English (4)
- Core Maths also studied, and opportunity to complete an Extended Project Qualification

For more information, visit <https://www.tlevels.gov.uk/>

Looking back at Autumn 2023.....

Year 10 Ely Cathedral Careers Fair

The whole year group spent time speaking to local businesses, colleges and universities at the careers fair. They all got a great deal out of the event, and feedback from the exhibitors about the engagement level from all students was fantastic



Year 9 Careers Support Workshops

Selected Year 9 students took part in a one-off careers workshop during this term delivered by the Careers Team. This was an opportunity to understand a little more about the qualification options available after Year 11, and also talk through what 'having a career' actually means. Students discussed what key skills businesses look for in employees, and they also talked about what jobs or careers they might be interested in in the future.

Year 8 Mushroom Farm visit

As part of our collaboration with local produce growers G's Fresh, two classes of Yr8 students visited their mushroom farm in Littleport. Students learnt how G's operate and run their businesses. They were then kitted out in fetching hairnets and overalls, and had a tour of the factory. They were shown the various stages of the growth life of a mushroom, and even got to pick their own for tasting!



Year 11 College applications

All students now have at least one college application or apprenticeship plan for September, and most will have their guidance meetings booked in for this term. It is always an anxious time, deciding what to do next, but they have all approached the process very maturely.

.....and looking towards Spring 2024

Yr9 World of Work (GCSE Options support)

Yr10 Careers guidance meetings - will start in Jan/Feb

Yr11 Mock Interviews - students will go through a mock interview process, which includes completion of an application form as well as the 20min interview

National Careers Week - external speakers will be invited in to talk to students about their career journey

Qualifications

The Parents' Guide to
www.theparentsguideto.co.uk

Level	Qualification / educational route				
8	Doctorate (PhD)		NVQ 8		
7	Masters degree (MA)		Degree apprenticeship / NVQ 5, 6, 7		
6	Bachelors degree BA or BSc				
5	Foundation degree FdA or FdSc	Higher National Diploma (HND)	Higher apprenticeship / NVQ 4		
4		Higher National Certificate (HNC)			
3	A levels Grades A-E	International Baccalaureate	T Levels	BTEC diploma BTEC certificate	Advanced apprenticeship / NVQ 3
2	GCSE Grades 4- 9 (C, B, A or A*)			BTEC first diploma	Intermediate apprenticeship / NVQ 2
1	GCSE Grades 1- 3 (D,E,F or G)			Foundation diploma / entry level qualifications	Traineeship / NVQ 1
	Academic route		Vocational route		Applied / work route

The range of courses available to students can appear to be a bit mind-boggling sometimes, and this is one area that students need to be clear about when they start looking at their options.

Colleges will have their own specific entry requirements but the table above can be used as a general guide.

Some colleges will require specific grades in certain subjects in order for students to study that course. Colleges that offer courses linked to apprenticeships may advise that a student should apply for a 1 year vocational course first to gain the basic industry knowledge rather than move straight to an apprenticeship. This will increase the chances of finding a suitable employer.

Research is the key for all of this, so the sooner students can start looking at options and ask questions the better.

Feedback

If you have any feedback about specific careers events we organise then we are very happy to receive them.

Likewise, if you have any suggestions about events you feel we should be putting on, or employers/businesses you would like us to invite into school, then feel free to let us know. We are always open to new ideas or proposals!!

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