Post 16 **Student Handbook**

ACET

Your future begins with ACET Post 16

Contents

Welcome to Post 16 at Aston Academy

We are delighted that you are continuing your educational journey with us.

Aston Academy Post 16 is a lively and diverse community of learners. Our aim, in keeping with Aston Community Education Trust's mission statement, is that every student is enabled "to reach their full potential, whatever their age, ability, gender or ethnicity". As such, we provide a broad and varied curriculum which caters for a wide range of learning needs.

Becoming a Post 16 student at Aston, however, is about more than just achieving academic qualifications. While this is of the highest priority, we want our students to develop all of the skills and the confidence they will need to move on successfully to their next stage; whether that be higher education, training or employment.

If you decide to study with us you will receive high quality care, guidance and support in order to ensure that you fulfil your potential, enjoy your time with us and are suitably prepared for your next step. You will be allocated a tutor who will support you with any problems or concerns you may have and who will review your progress with you on a regular basis, and provide you with additional one to one support.

Contact Us:
Post16@astonacademy.org
0114 2872171

The Post 16 Team		Additional Support	
Mr Graham	Principal	**Mrs Mawe**	Examinations Manager
Mr Hall	Post-16 Lead	**Mrs Smith**	Exam access arrangements
Mr Shaw	Careers Advisor	**Ms Haywood**	Safeguarding
Mr Raymond	Careers Advisor	**Mr Wilson**	Attendance

Resilience   Pride   Respect   Ambition   Responsibility

The School Day

PERIOD 1	8.30am	9.30am
PERIOD 2	9.30am	10.30am
BREAK	10.30am	10.50am
MOVEMENT TIME	10.50am	10.55am
PERIOD 3	10.55am	11.55am
TUTOR TIME & BRIEFING	11.55am	12.25pm
LUNCH	12.25pm	12.55pm
MOVEMENT TIME	12.55pm	1.00pm
PERIOD 4	1.00pm	2.00pm
PERIOD 5	2.00pm	3.00pm

Tutorial

Every student in Post 16 will be assigned to a tutor who you will see for 2 x 30 minute sessions each week where you will cover a wide range of PSHE topics. You will be given key support and information around Post 18 options and UCAS applications. In addition, you will also be expected to attend a Post 16 briefing once a week. Attendance to briefing and tutor time is compulsory; we monitor and follow up any non–attendance. Briefings are essential for passing on key notices and information. We will also have a wide range of guest speakers attending to discuss information on a range of topics linked to the PSHE programme and Post 18 options.

Why Aston Post 16?

We are committed to providing the highest quality academic, vocational and personal education to all our post-16 students. We are proud of our track record of excellent exam results combined with promoting personal development. We believe the students that stay with Aston or join us from another school deserve the best experience of post-16 education. As a post-16 student, you will receive:

1. Teaching from experienced post-16 subject specialists
2. 1 hour of age-appropriate Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education per week on personal skills, study skills, physical and mental health, careers, relationships, first aid and adult life skills.
3. A weekly briefing to keep you informed about upcoming events and opportunities.
4. Termly face-to-face academic mentoring with your personal tutor
5. Appointments with a trained careers advisor in the Post-16 area
6. Outside speakers on a range of post-18 options and careers
7. A week in summer of Year 12 to do work shadowing.
8. Personalised support to complete applications for university, apprenticeships and employment.
9. An individual appointment with a member of the post-16 team to check and send applications to university.
10. The opportunity to gain the Sports Leaders qualification.
11. Informed advice for students applying for Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary courses.
12. Visits to universities.
13. A visit to UCAS Discovery in Summer of Year 12 for all students to explore career options.
14. Opportunities to be a literacy, numeracy and mental health mentor for younger students
15. Opportunities to organise fundraising for charities including Macmillan, Children in need and the Sheffield Children's Hospital.
16. The chance to be a Post-16 Student Leader, acting as the student voice.
17. Advice on gap year opportunities.
18. A generous bursary scheme to support students who need financial assistance to access education
19. A post-16-only quiet study space, exam room, and 30 computers to use in study periods.
20. A common room and pool room just for post-16 students

Attendance Policy

Students are in school for 190 days out of 365 per year. This means you have 175 days for holidays, family time, appointments and 'other life events'. Parents and carers are legally responsible for ensuring their child is educated and there must be a good reason for any absences e.g. genuine illness. We promote and expect excellent attendance above 95%. Excellent attendance is important whether in school, university or employment. There is a strong correlation between attendance and achievement. Aim for 100% attendance in order to give yourself the best chance of success. If there are circumstances when students cannot attend, it is their responsibility to catch up any work missed.

If a student has an unplanned absence and genuinely cannot attend eg due to illness then the parent/carer must contact the school by phoning 0114 2872171 explaining the reason for the absence before 8:00am. Parents/carers will be contacted by text on the first day of absence if a student is expected in school but we do not have an attendance mark.

Planned absence - inform post-16 by emailing **post16@astonacademy.org** before any planned absence. Students are expected to make medical appointments outside school hours, where possible, to avoid missing taught lessons.

Student attendance will be monitored to ensure that students, parents and carers are kept informed of any concerns. We contact parents where there are persistent attendance concerns.

Holidays

It is more important than ever that students do not miss lessons so please do not book holidays during term time. Holidays taken in term time will be unauthorised. Good attendance is a condition with regard to continuation on courses, participation in trips/visits and suitability for senior positions in student leadership teams. This is particularly important in June and July when all students will be continuing with their A level studies. Open days – Most universities now offer Open Days on weekends and holidays. Attend these when possible in order to avoid missing lessons.

Monitoring and Assessment

During your Post-16 courses, your progress will be assessed formally at least once a term in each subject. Depending on the course, this assessment will take the form of:

- Standardised assessments in exam conditions
- Standardised assessments in classrooms
- External exams (vocational subjects)
- Coursework units (vocational exams)
- Controlled assessments (in some A level courses including English Language, English Literature, History and Geography)
- Laboratory practicals (in some Science courses)

In addition to this, teachers will be assessing student progress using more regular, informal methods including essays and classroom tests, independent work completed at home and through class discussions.

These assessments have several purposes:

- To assess student progress at various points of the course
- Inform predicted grades (submitted by teachers in Autumn of Year 13): these are used to guide advice of what post-18 options are suitable for students.
- To ensure students have a clear idea of their strengths and areas of development in each course
- To prepare students for the requirements of external exams

Trial exams

Trial exams are standardised assessments conducted in exam conditions (silence, timed, and in exam venues). They are designed to provide practice for external exams. All external exam regulations will be followed in trial exams. Students must be on time, fully equipped with everything they need for the exam including calculator if required. They will hand in phones and watches as required in external exams protocol.

Communication home

Each term, a letter will be emailed to inform parents/carers of their child's progress in their courses. The data will include the following for each course studied:

    Current grade
    Estimated grade
    Character in the classroom score

An explanation of the data will be included in the letter. The Character in the Classroom score will provide information about the students attitude and commitment to learning.

If you have any questions/concerns about your child's progress in post-16 at any point, please contact post16@astonacademy.org.

Post 16 Expectations

We expect all Post 16 students to:

1. Attend all lessons on time with any equipment needed for their lessons
2. Attend all briefings and tutor periods on time
3. Attend all meetings with school staff on time
4. Inform the school of any absences on or before each day you are absent via the school phone number– 0114 2872171.
5. Ensure that all classwork is completed to the best of their ability.
6. Catch up on work missed due to absence and see your teacher if you need support
7. Complete (and submit if relevant) all homework and assignments on time
8. Organise your work neatly and appropriately.
9. Be committed to a high level of effort with classwork and independent study throughout their courses
10. Adhere to the trust mobile phone policy
11. Adhere to the Post 16 dress code by dressing appropriately for an educational environment.
12. Show respect for other people, their property and the Academy building and facilities at all times.

Mobile Phones and Devices

In line with the ACET trust policy, mobile phones, devices and headphones are not allowed out in lessons, on corridors, outside buildings or anywhere on the school site. We ask that Post 16 students are role models to students in Y7-Y11 and do not have phones out whilst moving around school, on corridors, outside the buildings or in lessons.

We do however, appreciate as young adults you may wish to use your mobile phone during break, lunchtime and free periods. Therefore, mobile phones are allowed in our Post 16 areas– common room, café, pool room and study room. We do however, ask you to be mindful that these are shared areas and be considerate of your fellow students.

ID Badges/Signing in and Out

When you enrol, we will produce a photo ID card for you. Students must always wear their ID lanyards. It is a safeguarding requirement that we know the identity of everyone in the building. If you forget your lanyard you must collect (and return) a temporary one from the Post 16 office. If you lose your ID badge, you will need to purchase a replacement at a cost of £3. This can be done in the Post 16 office.

These badges will also give you access to the main reception gate and Post 16 entrance. This means you can use your ID badge to gain access to the school site at any point during the school day.

Post 16 Enrichment Opportunities

We want our students to develop personally as well as academically while in post-16 education. Students' personal development is supported through the compulsory Tutor Time PSHE program as well as a range of optional extracurricular opportunities.

Tutor time PSHE program
Post-16 students attend one briefing (assembly) and two tutor time periods every week. In the briefings, we will inform students about upcoming school, national or international events and give advice and resources to support post-18 applications. In the tutor time periods, students will follow a detailed PSHE program covering the following themes:
Y12 Half term 1: Post-16 personal and study skills
Y12 Half term 2: Social inclusion
Y12 Half term 3: Physical health
Y12 Half term 4: Mental health
Y12 Half term 5: Post-18 options
Y12 Half term 6: Post-18 applications
Y12 Half term 1: British values and citizenship
Y12 Half term 2: Adult relationships
Y12 Half term 3: First aid
Y12 Half term 4: Adult life skills

Charity Fundraising
Aston Post-16 students take a lead role in a variety of fundraising activities in school. These include Macmillan Coffee Morning, Children in Need and the Winter and Summer Snowflake fayre. In doing so, students demonstrate a willingness to make a positive contribution to school and wider society. They also display effective communication and team work.

Post-16 student leaders
Students are able to join the Post-16 Student Leaders group. Student Leaders work with the Post-16 team to improve the experience of students in Post-16 based on feedback from fellow students. They also represent the school at events such as open evenings and awards evening. We have a nominated head boy and girl who will take a lead on this.

Mentoring
Post-16 students can choose to mentor younger students to support their literacy, numeracy and mental health. The mentoring program enhances post-16 students' communication and empathy, as well as supporting the skills of their fellow students.

Sports Leaders
Students on the Cambridge Technical Sport and Physical Education course can gain a Sports Leaders qualification from organising sporting events and coaching younger students.

Work experience
Post-16 students are encouraged to engage in work experience to gain insight into careers and develop skills required in the workplace. Please see later pages for more detailed advice on work shadowing and volunteering.

Trips and talks
There are a range of trips and talks available to post-16 students including a free UCAS event at Sheffield Arena, university visits and many other subject-specific trips and talks.

Super-curricular activities are ways students educate themselves about their subject beyond the content covered by their subject curriculums. We encourage all students to engage in super-curricular educational activities to deepen and broaden their subject knowledge and demonstrate curiosity and enthusiasm for their subjects. Super-curricular activities are especially important when applying to competitive degree courses as they show genuine interest and motivation to study a subject in depth. There are a number of super-curricular activities we recommend:

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)
MOOCs are free online courses which students can complete. They are often linked to universities or international companies. They allow students to learn from experts in their subjects. **Future Learn** and **edX** are two large providers of MOOCs. The summers before Year 12 and Year 13 are a good time for students to complete MOOCs.

Books
Reading books related to their subjects is a simple but effective way to deepen knowledge and demonstrate   curiosity. See individual subject staff for recommendations.

Podcasts
There are likely to be podcasts related to all subject and future career options. Search for podcasts on areas of personal interest on a podcast provider on your phone or computer. These can be a good option if you prefer listening to reading.

Email subscriptions
Subscribe to latest research emails from Associations relating to your subject. For example, The British Psychological Society (BPS) sends free fortnightly summaries of recently published research so you can keep up to date with the latest research in your subject areas.

TED talks
Try websites such as TED – they showcase free 10-20 minute videos of talks from expert speakers from around the world relating to a wide variety of subjects and issues.

What is work shadowing?

Work shadowing is observing someone doing their work and learning what this involves. It is useful to understand the daily tasks involved in a particular job. It also helpful to gain an insight into the characteristics that are useful in a particular job.

What is volunteering?

Volunteering is choosing to give your time to work without being paid. Volunteering is useful to gain an insight into a job without the commitment of paid work. It also demonstrates interest in the career and selflessness to give your time freely to help people and gain new skills.

When should we do work shadowing?

We want to give you time in the academic year for work shadowing. We would like everyone to organise and complete work shadowing in the summer term of Year 12. We offer support within school to assist with this, however the onus is on the student. You can also organise work shadowing or volunteering at other times as long as it is outside lesson time. This might be during regular times of the week or during the school holidays.

Does the school organise work shadowing for us?

No – you should organise your own work shadowing or volunteering. There are two main reasons for this. You are best placed to decide what work shadowing or volunteering opportunities are most interesting or useful to you. Secondly, the organisation of the placement itself shows that you are proactive with effective communication skills.

How should I set up work shadowing/volunteering?

Search for workplaces that are relevant to careers you are interested in and that you are able to travel to. Contact the workplaces by email/phone – introduce yourself politely and ask if you can speak to someone about work shadowing or volunteering. You may have to wait for a response and follow up any contact after a few days if you have not heard back. Be willing to be persistent and keep trying many workplaces. Be polite and grateful at all times even if you do not get a positive response.

Why do we need to do work shadowing or volunteering?

For careers in health care (medicine, nursing, midwifery, physiotherapy etc), education and social work, work shadowing or volunteering may be necessary to get a place on a course. For many other courses, work shadowing may be either required or highly beneficial.

What workplaces might provide useful work shadowing for different careers?

Please see specific schemes, contacts and ideas are on the following page…

Academic/research – Search for opportunities at university departments at the University of Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam University and other local universities

Architecture/town planning – Contact local architects, chartered surveyors, town planning departments of local councils

Agriculture and environment - Contact farms and environmental companies/charities. See also https://www.architecture.com/education-cpd-and-careers/learning/architecture-work-experience-placements

Animal care – contact vets, stables, catteries, kennels, animal sanctuaries, animal farms, RSPCA or RSPB

Art and creative industries – Contact galleries, museums and studios. Email youngpeople@sheffieldmuseums.org.uk

Business, administration and finance – contact businesses, banks, accountants and financial services companies
Apply for HSBC work experience by Feb/March: https://www.hsbc.com/careers/students-and-graduates/student-opportunities/uk-work-experience-programme.
Apply from October for Sheffield Hospitals admin work shadowing https://brilliantplace.sth.nhs.uk/work-experience.html

Digital/IT careers – contact digital/IT firms. Try Sheffield Technology Parks, Cooper Buildings, Arundel Street, Sheffield S1 2NS, 0114 22 11 800, hello@shefftechparks.com

Education and child care – contact nurseries, schools, colleges or universities

Engineering – contact engineering and construction firms. Try https://www.sheffieldforgemasters.com/careers/early-careers

Health care – contact NHS and private hospitals (try Bupa), GPs and private therapists
Apply from October at Sheffield Hospitals for medicine, nursing, dentist and dental nursing shadowing https://brilliantplace.sth.nhs.uk/work-experience.html
Read https://www.therotherhamft.nhs.uk/join-the-team/work-experience
Try https://www.rcgp.org.uk/training-exams/discover-general-practice/observe-gp

Law – contact lawyers and courts. Read https://careerinlaw.net/uk/law-work-experience-uk/year-12-and-a-level-law-work-experience

Leisure – contact leisure centres, gyms, sports clubs or personal trainers

Performing arts – contact theatres, amateur theatre groups, recording studios. Complete form for Sheffield Theatres here: https://www.sheffieldtheatres.co.uk/get-involved/schools/work-experience

Protective services – contact local branches of the Army, Navy, RAF, Police or Fire Brigade
Read https://www.syfire.gov.uk/contact/ , https://vpc.police.uk/be-a-cadet and https://jobs.army.mod.uk/base/

Marketing – contact marketing companies

Social care/work – contact care homes, the local council and social care companies
See https://www.syrechealthandsocialcarecareers.co.uk/work-experience-1
See https://www.srsb.org.uk/Jobs-and-Volunteering/Work-Experience-Placements/

Search for all types of work experience at https://www.speakersforschools.org/work-experience-opportunities/ or for virtual work experience with international organisations on https://www.springpod.com/ or https://www.theforage.com/

See the Post-16 and careers team for further workplaces to try.

Careers Information

Post-16 education is an important time for deciding on future careers. At Aston Post-16, students have access to two careers advisors, Mr Shaw and Mr Raymond who have an office in the Post-16 area. If students wish to book a careers appointment, they can do this directly with Mr Shaw or Mr Raymond.

Careers talks

Careers talks are a key part of the tutor time program at Aston. There will be regular careers talks organised during the school year. These will include talks from universities, apprenticeship providers, employers and former students. We aim to cover a range of possible industries including finance, law, healthcare and education so that students can make a more informed decision about their options when they leave post-16.

Careers within PSHE

In addition, careers advice embedded within the weekly PSHE program includes:
    How to create a curriculum vitae (CV)
    How to write a personal statement
    How to apply to university through UCAS
    How to search for apprenticeships
    How to search for employment
    How to gain work shadowing/volunteering
    The purposes and benefits of a gap year

Post-18 Careers Booklet

Students will receive a 40-page Careers Booklet in the summer term of Year 12 which provides detailed advice about the main post-18 options (university, apprenticeships, employment and gap year). It also contains example personal statements for a range of courses including Business, Engineering, Geography, Law, Psychology, Medicine, Nursing, Sports Coaching and Teaching.

UCAS Application Support

Read the UCAS – Applying to University pages.

IT Information

Logins and Laptops

All students will be issued with a network logon so you can access all electronic services that support your learning at Aston Academy. Your network logon is personal to you so please keep this private and do not share with others. Any teacher can reset your password if needed. At Post 16 students have access to two towers of laptops to use in school. All activity on the network is logged and monitored. Any inappropriate use will result in your logon privileges being removed and parents/carers being made aware. Please make sure you log off or lock your machine if you leave your work station for any reason.

Google Classroom

While studying at Post 16 students will be provided with a log in for a Google Classroom account. For each of the subjects you are studying you will have a Google Classroom page where you will find notices from teaching staff, homework and any information related to your subject. There will also be a Google Classroom for the whole year group. This is used by the year team to share any Post 16 specific notices such as guest speakers, assemblies and enrichment opportunities. **We recommend students downloading Google Classroom as an app and turning on notifications so no information is missed.**

# Financial Information

16-19 Bursary Fund

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome the specific financial barriers to participation they face so they can remain in education. Bursary funding can include supporting eligible students with costs such as subject text books, transport to and from school and school enrichment opportunities. More information will be provided to students at the start of each academic year with an application form available on the school website.

Parent Pay

We use an e-payment system for school related payments including purchasing food. Students that attended Aston Academy in year 11 will continue to use their previous account. Students joining us from other schools will receive an activation letter at the start of term. School payments will be added to your account as appropriate to you.

Post 16 Lockers

Lockers are available for all students, should you wish to hire one. These are charged as £10 —£5 deposit and £5 refundable on return of your key and clearing the locker. Payments can be made via parent pay. Once payment has been made, lockers are allocated in the Post 16 office. Please see one of the team.
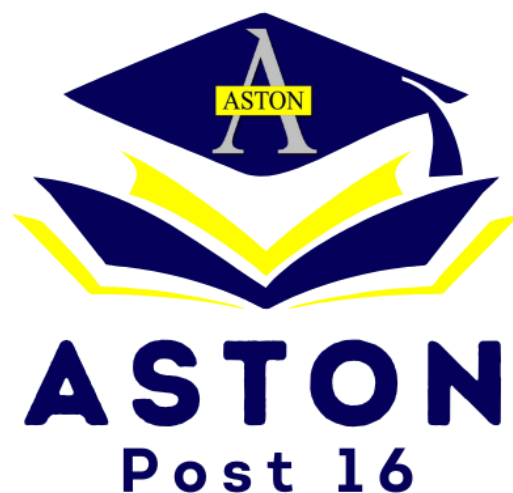
If students decide to apply to university following their post-16 studies, the application must be made through a centralised website UCAS (University and Colleges Admissions Service). UCAS applications can usually be started in May of Year 12 for university entry the following Autumn. To start an application, students need to go to the UCAS website and register for a student account. When you begin an application, select the option to apply via an institution (not as an individual), and type the buzzword to link your application to the school (we will inform students of the buzzword during tutor time). You can send your application from September of Year 13. The deadline for applications to Music Conservatoire courses and for Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Medicine/Science will be earlier, usually in October. The deadline to have equal consideration for other courses is usually mid January but it is best to apply before this date. You cannot accidentally send your application to UCAS without it being approved by the Post 16 Team. The cost of a UCAS application is currently £28.50. The application is free is you received free school meals in Year 11.

Your application will contain the following information

Your application will contain the following information

1. Your personal details: name, date of birth and gender
2. Contact and residency details: nationality, address, mobile number, email address and whether you want to allow someone else to act or speak on your behalf to universities (we recommend you select yes and state the name and relationship of one of your parents/carers).
3. Education: add all your previous qualifications (GCSEs and Cambridge National Level 1/2s) and grades with the month (June) and year of award. Add the qualifications you are currently taking with the grade listed as 'pending' and June of Year 13 as the date of award.
4. Employment: list any paid part time work you have done with start and end dates.
5. Nationality details: state your nationality.
6. Supporting information: state whether you or your parents have ever lived or worked in the EU or Switzerland.
7. English language skills: state whether English is your first language. If it is not, you will be asked for evidence of your English language skills.
8. Finance and funding: when asked what will be your main source of funding for your studies, select UK, ChI, IoM or EU student finance services unless you want to pay your fees upfront without taking out any loans. We recommend applying for student finance so select the option above and your local council in the drop-down box below this question.
9. Personal statement: outline why you are applying for your courses (see the next page for further advice)
10. Choices: choose between 1 and 5 courses to apply for.
11. Reference and Predicted Grades: this section is completed by your teachers, tutor and Post-16 team.

Tips for completing the application

- When asked to select your Area of Permanent Residency – choose your local Council (usually Rotherham or Sheffield).
- Under Finance and funding, select the place your parents pay council tax to (Rotherham or Sheffield).
- When completing the Education section, enter all your GCSE and equivalent qualifications (ask your teachers/post 16 team for the exam board or use your GCSE certificates). Ask your tutor or Post-16 team for your Unique Learner Number (ULN).

Below are the correct names of vocational courses:

- Applied Science: Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Cert (360) (2016 to Present) in (Applied Science)
- Forensic and Criminal Investigation: Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Diploma (720)
- Single Health and Social Care: OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical National Extended Certificate in (Health & Social Care)
- Double Health and Social Care: OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Diploma in (Health & Social Care)
- Single Sport and Physical Activity: OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate in Sport and Physical Activity
- Double Sport and Physical Activity: OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical Diploma in Sport and Physical Activity

Please click 'Review and Send' once your application is complete and checked. This sends the application to school (not to UCAS). You will pay for the application at this point. Then drop into the Post-16 office to arrange a time to send the application. We cannot send the application to UCAS until you have paid for it.

Although the advice on this page is aimed at university applicants, much of the advice can be used to prepare a personal statement for a job/apprenticeship too.

Personal Statements
The personal statement is the section of your university application where you explain why you are applying for your chosen courses. You can write up to a maximum of 4000 characters to explain your reasons for applying and persuade the universities that you are a strong applicant for the courses.

In the personal statement, you respond to the three questions below. Remember to proofread your answers carefully so the spelling, punctuation and grammar are correct before submitting. It is a good idea to ask a parent, another student or teacher to check your statement once you have checked it and to also run it through an online grammar checker such as Grammarly. The personal statement is your chance to express why you should get a place on the course over other candidates so how you write it should be specific to you.

1. Why do you want to study this course or subject?
Explain in a few sentences why you are applying for the course(s). Your course choice(s) might be related to a career you would like to work in. If so, explain why you want to work in this career and how the course will help you achieve this career. Alternatively, you may want to explore a subject in more depth. If so, explain why the subject inspires your interest. Your answer should demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment to the course, without being overstated or clichéd.

2. How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?
Explain how your education has given you knowledge and skills that you need to succeed on the course. Consider the courses you are currently studying; are there topics within the courses that link directly to the course you are applying for? What skills will you need to succeed on your courses? (*consider clear written communication skills, verbal communication, research, data analysis, critical thinking, time management, referencing, ability to cope under pressure…*) How has your education helped you demonstrate/develop these skills? The more specific your examples, the better.

3. What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?
Explain how other experiences have given you knowledge and skills that you need to succeed on the course. The experiences may include self-directed super-curricular learning, research, involvement in sports or social clubs, employment or work experience. You should explain what you learned from the experience, what skills you developed or what interest was sparked. Explain how the experience will help you succeed on the course (s) you are applying for.

Student Finance
Student finance applications should be completed by May 2026. Students can apply for a tuition fee loan, which covers the full cost of tuition and is paid directly to the university. All students are also eligible for a maintenance loan to cover living costs while at university, which is based on your parents' household income. To see how much you would be eligible to receive, search for **Student Finance England calculator**. For more information, search for **Student Finance England**. As schools do not have access to student finance applications and they are calculated based on household income, student finance applications should be completed with parents rather than in school. If there is any way we can help with the student finance application though, do let us know.

As well as applying for an earlier deadline, there are some other unique aspects of applying for courses in Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Medicine/Science.

- The degree course will be 5 years rather than 3 years.
- Courses in these subjects are highly competitive. For example, only about 15% of applicants for Medicine are accepted.
- Some form of work experience is very important when applying; the more, the better. Ideally, a combination of shadowing practitioners (doctors, dentists, vets), experience in care/education settings, subject-specific university courses and super-curricular activities will provide the experience to create an effective application.
- You can only apply for a maximum of 5 degree courses in in Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Medicine/Science. If you use your 5th UCAS choice, it must be another subject. Common 5th choices include biomedical sciences; biochemistry; pharmacy; psychology; chemistry; biology; dental hygiene and therapy or zoology.
- You will almost always have a face-to-face or virtual interview.
- You must book and complete the University Clinical Aptitude Test (UCAT) at a test centre in the Summer/Autumn after Year 12 [Medicine and Dentistry applicants only]. This is a 2-hour computer-based test of verbal reasoning, decision making, quantitative reasoning, abstract reasoning, and situational judgement. Find out more, book the test and find practice questions at https://www.ucat.ac.uk/

Recommendations

1. Apply for work experience at Sheffield Hospitals for medicine and dentistry at: http://brilliantplace.sth.nhs.uk/work-experience.html
2. For work experience at Rotherham hospital https://www.therotherhamft.nhs.uk/join-the-team/work-experience
3. Contact GPs, dentists, vets and animal shelters for work shadowing.
4. Gain volunteer work at a school, care home and/or youth group.
5. Book the UCAT early (Booking usually opens in June and the UCAT must be sat before the end of September).
6. Practice UCAT questions for several weeks before sitting the test.
7. Complete super-curricular activities relating to your desired career.

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www.astonacademy.org

Resilience   Pride   Respect   Ambition   Responsibility