

DECEMBER 2022

# CAREERS NEWSLETTER

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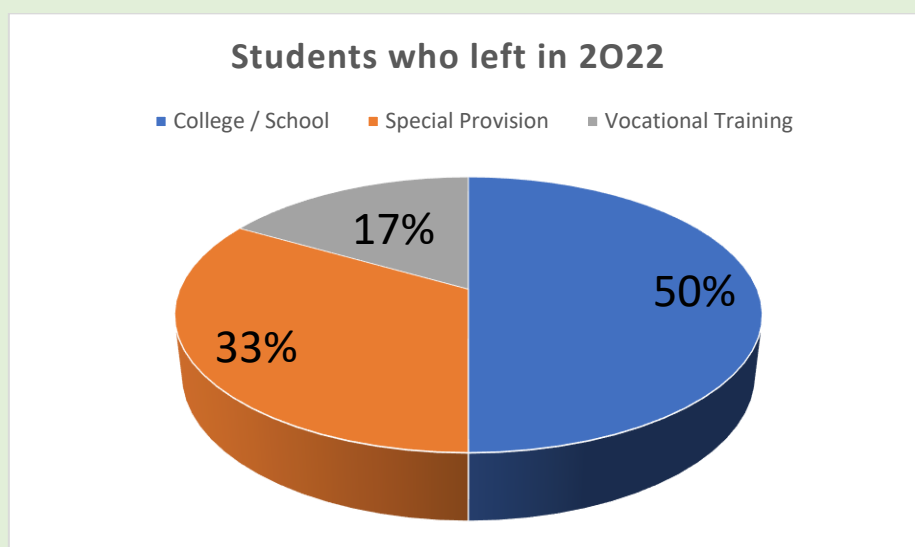
## And so, another school year has begun...

This term has seen the year 11s complete their mock exams to give them predicted grades and an indication of how they will perform in their summer exams. College investigation and application has also been a huge priority for our year 11s and we have made improvements in our compliance with the Gatsby Benchmarks. You can also see which options were taken up by our leavers this summer, all of whom have successfully moved on. We have had contact from a number of our 'old' year 11s and they all seem to be settling in well.

You can send any ideas you have for this newsletter to [alisongoode@exceptional-ideas.co.uk](mailto:alisongoode@exceptional-ideas.co.uk)

## DESTINATION DATA 2022

Here are the different destinations that our year 11 students moved on to last year:



### We transferred students to:

**CTP** – a vocational training centre where students are able to take courses in the trades such as hairdressing, beauty therapy, motor vehicle maintenance, plumbing, bricklaying and carpentry.

**Colchester Institute /sixth form** – providers of courses in a range of vocational courses and apprenticeships and A levels.

**Special Provision** – providers who offer students the opportunity to build their skills and independence in a supported environment. This work is done with a view to preparing the students for a course or employment in the future.

## GATSBY BENCHMARK COMPLIANCE

As you may be aware, all schools are required to meet 'The Gatsby Benchmarks' for good careers guidance. Below is our compliance against each of these benchmarks and our proposed work to help us to meet all of these.

| Gatsby Benchmark                                   | Current compliance % | Our compliance in 2021/2022 % | % of schools meeting this benchmark nationally | What we need to improve  |
|--|----------------------|-------------------------------|--|--|
| A stable careers programme                         | 76%                  | 64%                           | 43%  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtain feedback from employers</li> <li>Set up specific webpages for students, staff, parents and employers.</li> </ul> |
| Learning from career and labour market information | 80%                  | 100%                          | 66%  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage parents and carers to use labour market information</li> </ul>  |
| Addressing the needs of each pupil                 | 90%                  | 90%                           | 38%  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage pupils in allowing us to collect destination data for 3 years after they leave us.</li> </ul>                    |
| Linking curriculum learning to careers             | 100%                 | 25%                           | 60%  |  |
| Encounters with Employers                          | 100%                 | 100%                          | 56%  |  |
| Experiences of workplaces                          | 100%                 | 100%                          | 36%  |  |
| Encounters with further and higher education       | 100%                 | 100%                          | 33%  |  |
| Personal Guidance                                  | 100%                 | 100%                          | 65%  |  |

# COLLEGE INTERVIEW TIPS

You've finally decided what course you want to study when you go to college, your application has been submitted and you are now waiting for a response. So what's next? The chances are that the next communication you get from college will be to invite you for an interview. College interviews differ slightly from job interviews and are usually less formal and an opportunity for the college to get to know you. Here are some more tips to help you to prepare...

- Stay on top of your emails from as soon as you enter your college applications. This will be how they communicate, call you for interview and ask for you for any additional information they receive.
- Be on time – DON'T BE LATE!
- If you really need to, you can probably take an adult in with you, but it is best to check this before attending so you know for sure
- Have a clear idea of why you have chosen the course you have. Is it because it interests you? Is it taking you on a specific route to a career that you want to pursue? You can practice explaining why you have chosen it by discussing it with your family or student mentors.
- If you are taking an art course, be ready to share your portfolio of work with them. This may be done digitally or face to face. They won't want to see every piece of art you have ever done, just a small selection of some pieces that you like or are proud of. Do remember that your art doesn't have to be perfect to do this because ultimately you are going to college to learn more. Showing them something that needs more work and telling them how you might be able to improve if you did it again, is just as important.
- Take a list of your mock exam results with you to the interview, if these are available. These will be used to identify if the level of course you have applied for is suitable for you and you might be asked for them.
- Help them to understand your needs as a learner. Explain to them how you learn at school, what works well for you and the techniques that help you most.
- Don't be afraid to talk about what you find difficult or about your specific diagnoses / conditions and how you manage these on a day-to-day basis. Remember, you are the expert on you!
- Don't be flippant, cocky, silly or rude!
- Ask for some interview practice with a mentor, if you feel you need it.
- **Be positive.** The college want you as a student and they want you to be a success. It is in their interests, and yours, to understand how to teach you well.

***'Help will always be given at Hogwarts to those who ask'***

*- Albus Dumbledore, 'Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets'*

## Spotlight on...

# VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Vocational training is a form post-16 training that relates to a specific job or career. You will find vocational training courses in every further education college in the country, and these will cover a wide range of topics. Vocational learning has the sole purpose of enabling you to be 'work ready' by the end of the course. However, you could also move on to a higher level vocational course to extend your knowledge and increase your qualification as there are various levels available to suit all learners.

One of the biggest advantages of vocational training is that there are few exams involved in completing the course (check this though as some courses do require an exam at the end). Much of the course will be assignment based and you will build up a portfolio of work that is marked by your course tutors and then externally moderated to ensure that the marking is fair when you have completed your course. This means that you can closely monitor how well you are doing on your course, you will have a clear idea of what your final grade will be and also a clear understanding of exactly what you can do to improve your overall grade as the course progresses. For students who struggle with exams anxiety; mental health concerns that can impact on mood and, consequently, motivation or for students with memory retention problems this can be the perfect solution. It is also a good option for students who demonstrate a talent or interest in a specific area and want to focus on this.

For more information, have a look at your local colleges website and prospectus to see what types of courses they offer, at what academic levels and in what subjects. You'll see that any open events they are running will be advertised so if you are a year 10 or year 11, you might want to attend one to find out what college is really like.

<https://www.colchester.ac.uk/>

<https://chelmsford.ac.uk/>

<https://www.uspcollege.ac.uk/courses-apprenticeships/prospectus/>

<https://www.wsc.ac.uk/>

<https://writtle.ac.uk/>

<https://www.harlow-college.ac.uk/>

*"It is not as much about who you used to be, as it is about who you choose to be. "*

*Sanhita Baruah, author of The Art of Letting Go – Poetry for the Seekers'*

## When does a hobby become an addiction?

Over the last decade there has been a significant boom in using video games. Young and old alike enjoy them whether on a phone, PC or console, they are a fun way to connect with likeminded people and enjoy some escapism. This was especially true during the pandemic when people stayed at home due to the lockdown measures. In fact, during this time 3.1 billion people globally were video game consumers and with 8 billion people on the planet that means 40% of people around the world play video games. 50% of these individuals use their smartphones to game.

There are some surprising benefits to playing video games:

Gaming is often dismissed as unsophisticated or the domain of the sedentary but contrary to this it does carry some benefits, these include:

- Healthy brain stimulation
- Development of problem-solving skills
- Stress relief.

It can also benefit fine motor skills, improve dexterity and encourage persistence and determination. Video games have a use within the classroom, providing students with a fun way to learn that can be competitive and conversely collaborative. At Exceptional Ideas we value it as a one of our useful tools to keep our students engaged and the momentum of the lesson fun and exciting.

There are contrasting forces to gaming too. Unfortunately, there can be negative affects to an individual's health and emotional well-being if they are played too much. Some studies show that a mere 10-20 minutes of violent gaming can increase activity in the brain regions associated with arousal, anxiety and emotional reaction whilst simultaneously reducing activity in the frontal lobes that controls emotional regulation. Excessive use of gaming can increase aggression and decrease physical and mental health.

### When does excessive gaming become an addiction?

Problematic and excessive gaming can be classified as a behavioural addiction, much like gambling or some eating disorders. It occurs when an individual develops an unhealthy dependence on a particular behaviour or activity. As a society we tend to think of addiction in relation to substance misuse, but this is not the whole picture. Many people suffer from addictions that have nothing to do with drugs. Several studies show that some brain activity between substance use disorders and behaviour addictions are the same, especially the affect it has on our limbic system which controls motivation and reward. When an individual experiences withdrawal from a substance or a behaviour it triggers a craving which is connected to the motivation and reward system when the substance or behaviour is sought out dopamine is released which re-enforces the reward seeking behaviour.

### **What should you look out for?**

- An individual thinks about gaming a lot or all the time.
- Feeling bad when they can't play.
- A need to spend more and more time gaming to feel good.
- Not being able to quit or play any less.
- A loss of interest in other hobbies or indeed anything else.
- Neglecting to wash or eat.
- Lying about frequency of gaming.
- Isolation.
- Breakdown of interpersonal relationships.
- Decreased performance at school.

Gaming addiction or problematic gaming can directly affect an individual's academic ability. Students may suffer from fatigue, restlessness, irritability and preoccupation which will affect their engagement in schoolwork. As dopamine levels are affected some studies have identified a link between depression and gaming addiction leaving an individual feeling apathetic or with a hopelessness about the future which in turn can affect long-term academic or career aspirations.

### **What can you do?**

Remember that not everyone who plays a lot or who is very enthusiastic about gaming has a problem, the percentage of gamers who are addicts is extremely low, between 1 and 9%. If you believe your child or loved one is gaming excessively there are some things that you could do: set time limits for play and stick to them, try and keep phones and gadgets out of bedrooms so that they don't play into the night (easier said than done I know) try and engage your child or loved one in other activities and exercise and insist that your child or loved one plays games that are appropriate for their age. They may seem well equipped to cope with games above their age limit but in actual fact they may not be developmentally mature enough to cope with certain types of exposure.

If you continue to worry about your child, contact us at the school and we would be happy to assist you. At Exceptional Ideas we want your child to fulfil their potential, achieve and thrive and to ensure they transition to pastures new having had an enriched experience and education.

***Written by Lydia Butterley, Student Mentor / Transition Lead at Teaseldown School.***

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## **Key dates:**

Click the links to some of the national careers work happening next term for more information:

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Thursday 2.2.23:</b>  | Careers Event in school – Interview skills. Reflect on the behaviours of a good and bad job interviews             |
| <b>6.3.23 – 11.3.23</b>  | <a href="#"><u>National Careers Week</u></a>   |
| <b>Wednesday 8.3.23</b>  | <a href="#"><u>International Women's Day</u></a>   |
| <b>10.3.23 – 19.3.23</b> | <a href="#"><u>British Science Week</u></a>  |
| <b>Friday 24.3.23:</b>   | Careers Event in school – Green Careers. Learn about careers in sustainability, the environment and climate change |

**Next Issue: April 2023**