

APRIL 2023

CAREERS NEWSLETTER

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This issue focuses on improving our students understanding of themselves and helping them to understand more about the world after Exceptional Ideas. We have articles written by two members of the Transition Team who help students to challenge themselves, raise their aspirations and prepare them for when the time arrives for our students to move on. They are vital part of a student's transition process.

We've included some Labour Market Information (LMI) facts, which may surprise you, as well as giving you a clear understanding of what A levels are so that you can compare this post-16 option with some of the others that we have included in our past newsletters. By now, you should have all the information you need to make a choice about which route might suit you or, as a parent / carer / student mentor, the information required to give helpful advice on this.

You can send any ideas you have for future newsletters to alisongoode@exceptional-ideas.co.uk

Spotlight on...

A LEVELS

Next we have A Levels (the A actually stands for *Advanced*).

A levels are the 'traditional' next step up from GCSEs. They are academic qualifications, often requiring exams as part of the assessment process as opposed to the more practical vocational qualifications that we have discussed previously.

A Level courses are usually delivered in an academic setting such as a school sixth form or in a separate sixth form college.

There are around 40 different A levels that can be studied depending on what your intended career path is. However, not all sixth forms offer all of these so when making a decision about which you would like to study it is important to check what your post 16 provider offers, particularly if you need a specific subject to obtain a place at university. Some providers offer a combination of A levels and a vocational qualification. Usually you would choose 3 A levels to study.

To study A Levels you will need to obtain a minimum of 5 grade 4s in your GCSEs. Some specific A Levels may require a higher grade than others so make sure that you know this BEFORE you sit your GCSEs.

A Levels are a fantastic option for students who take the exam process in their stride. They are also helpful for students who don't have a specific career in mind yet or who don't want to restrict their options. A Levels offer the opportunity to continue a general education so you can continue taking subjects that interest you while also allowing you to demonstrate your academic ability and general capability by gaining good results.

Careers events

An update from Marnie Bevan, Transition Lead for Brook View School.

At Exceptional Ideas we have created tailored events for our students to provide them with as much knowledge and experience as possible to enter the working world.

One of our events was taking part in our re-invented version of the board game 'The Game of Life'. Students were able to focus on the careers that might interest them, the ways that you can budget your own salary and allow them to have social opportunities to discuss careers related topics with their peers.

We have also held events with guest speakers coming to talk to our students about the industry that they work in. We have run sessions with the directors of Exceptional Ideas who spoke to students about what it is like to be your own boss and life at University. We also organised for a police officer to come and meet the students as a group to discuss what it is like to work in the police force. During these sessions students are always encouraged to ask our speakers questions about their jobs and what it is like to work in their industry.

We recently created a workplace scavenger hunt. This event allowed students to work in teams going out into local communities to actively search for all the work places on a list that they had been given (there were 65 in total). Students were encouraged to speak to professionals in their working environment and find out information about their jobs. One group of students received a tour of a local fire station and were able to try out the equipment on the fire engine. Students highly rated going out into the community and thrived on being able to compete against other teams, finding as many businesses as possible. They were then able to get back to the meeting point by a specific time, allowing them to manage their own time to a deadline. Whilst this event gave the students a good idea of why time keeping is so important, it also gave students the confidence to be able to talk to new people and showed them how to work in a team competitively alongside being able to do primary research into a range of career options.

Most recently we have held an interview skills event and our students thoroughly enjoyed putting their mentors through the interview process. Students were split into pairs and asked to come up with a set of interview questions to be able to ask two candidates. Students took these interviews **very** seriously and when it came to interviewing their candidates, they showed enthusiasm and knew exactly what to look for during the interviews and what they needed to look for as a candidate for the student mentor role. They very early on decided what a good and what a bad interview looked like and their engagement with the event was continuous throughout the session. Each pair of students had a discussion after the interviews and decided which candidate they would offer the job to and why.

There has been steady engagement from the students at Exceptional Ideas with these planned events and feedback has always been welcomed from the students regarding what they enjoyed or did not enjoy. The skills and knowledge developed from these careers events is invaluable for our students. Teamwork, social skills, budgeting and customer service skills are all skills that the students of Exceptional Ideas will be able to take with them when they eventually leave us. These important transferable skills along with the many other skills that they learn and develop within all of the other careers events, will be useful in any working environment in the future.

LMI: Did you know...?

A recent report found that 90% of employees surveyed – including workers and managers – are happier with the increased freedom they now have to work from home, suggesting that this is likely to be a trend that is here to stay.

The World Economic Forum predicts that AI and automation will lead to the creation of 97 million new jobs by 2025. However, people working in many existing jobs will also find their roles changing, as they are increasingly expected to develop their own abilities with AI technology.

The number of people applying for Nursing degrees in the UK has fallen by 8%. However, Nursing is one of the few degrees with a 99% chance of employment on completion. Along the same theme, graduate Chiropractors have 95% likelihood of employment.

£5.5 billion was spent in UK salons and barbers in 2019 /2020. Self-employment in this sector is extremely high with some hairdressers obtaining a six figure salary when they supplement their work by building their own brands, or becoming brand ambassadors for other companies within the industry.

References: Careers Matters, CDI, 2023

Work experience

PARENTS AND CARERS, WE NEED YOUR HELP!!

We continue to offer work experience to our year 10s. This is such a valuable experience for them to assist in building both their independence and their knowledge of the working world. Unfortunately, since lockdown we have really struggled to find placements as people are reluctant to take students on. We are currently working on some options within Exceptional Ideas Ltd but placements in less familiar surroundings can give our students so much more. If you know anyone who would be willing to offer a work experience placement, even for a short period, please let your school transition lead know.

“One of the greatest values of mentors is the ability to see ahead what others cannot see and to help them navigate a course to their destination.”

John C Maxwell, America author of many books on leadership and a pastor

Risk Taking: Making Safer Choices

By Lydia Prime, Transition Lead, Teaseldown School.

How do you make safer choices?

You make decisions or choices every day. Some decisions are simple, such as what to wear, while some are more complex. Even decisions that seem simple at first can have important consequences. For example, choosing what to eat for one meal can be a simple decision. But, over time, the choices you make about what food to eat can have a big effect on your health.

So how do you make a safe choice?

Adolescents and young adults take more risks than any other age group (Steinberg, 2008). Firstly, you need to understand why teens are greater risk takers. The good news is that this is a perfectly normal part of growing up, taking risks and trying new things is an essential part of learning and finding your identity. In your teenage years your brain is undergoing significant changes and the neurotransmitter dopamine is being released in greater levels than in any other time in your life. Dopamine isn't just a 'feel good' chemical it is connected to your reward and motivation system. A surprising or unexpected reward causes a dopamine release which means an adolescent's reward system is more excited by risk and will try to seek it out particularly when you are with your peers, this will then motivate you to focus on your peers when in decision-making situations that involve risky behaviour such as using substances, engaging in casual sex, driving dangerously. This can lead to being in dangerous and harmful situations.

So, whilst it is important that you make some decisions that have an unknown outcomes (risk) for your learning and development, it is also vital that you consider your options and outcomes before you make decisions that can put you in harm's way.

So how do you do that? Well, there are some decision-making steps you can take:

- The first step is to recognise that a decision needs to be made.
- Stop and think before you act, what do you need to know before you make a safe decision? who can help you with that?
- What are the choices you have?
- What are the possible outcomes of the choices you have?
- Which one is the healthy and safe option for you? Why?
- Are you happy with your decision?

If you are unsure about making decisions there are lots of people that can help you, you could talk to your parents or carers, they were teenagers once! Your mentors are always available to talk through the choices and options you have and will be happy to assist you. Or if you would like to talk to somebody more impartial, here are a list of websites you can contact:

<https://www.teenissues.co.uk/>

<https://www.healthforteens.co.uk/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/>

<https://www.barnardos.org.uk/>

<https://hubofhope.co.uk/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/youth-mental-health/>

References

Psychologytoday.com

Developingadolescent.semel.ucla.ed.

"It is hard to fail, but it is worse never to have tried to succeed."

- Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States from 1901 to 1909

Post exam transition

Post exam transition sessions are available for year 11 students who have completed their exams. This is usually one visit a week to work on specific aspects of transition to post-16 providers. These can include helping students learn more about their next provider, helping them prepare therapeutically, learn about meeting new people or travel training to help them plan and carry out their college journey on buses and trains.

Commencing the week after students complete their exams, Post Exam Transition continues until the end of the school year. Students will be asked to opt in or out when receiving their study leave packs.

Key dates:

28.4.2023: Last day for students going on study leave

16.5.2023: Careers Event 5 - Workplace Visit to Aerozone, Stansted Airport

16.5.2023: Exams begin

20.6.2023: Last GCSE exam

28.6.2023 Contingency day for exams

2.7.2023: Careers Event 6 – Speaker

Next Issue: July 2023