



Weekly Student Bulletin for Braintree Sixth Form Students Friday 20th October 2023

Dear BSF Students

Well done for getting to the end of your first/fourth/seventh (delete as appropriate!) half term. Hopefully all of you who are in Year 12 are feeling settled now and are adjusting to the big step up that sixth form is and those in Year 13 have your eyes set on what next year holds for you. Parents evening for Year 13 should have given you a clear idea of where you need to focus your efforts going forward. The folder checks that we have just completed should be a good opportunity to reflect on your own organisation and the half term break is an opportunity to address any issues that the process highlighted. I'm not sure whether I was heartened or dismayed to see one of you on the floor by the photocopier with the contents of your folder spread out before you ready to be streamlined!

Year 12 now have the same target sheets that Year 13 already have, and these should be with you at all times in the sixth form. As Ms Brewis-Shephard explained in assembly this week, these forms are for you to complete each time you do an assessment and will be a record of the targets you need to focus on in order to hit your Minimum Expected Grade. Think about the PD session you had on SMART targets when setting these targets. These should be helpful in focusing your independent study and should mean nobody can ever tell me that they have nothing to do! There is always something you can be doing!

Please also use the half term to arrange your work experience placement for the week of 8-12th July. There are fantastic opportunities out there, but they will get snapped up by the most organised students so don't put off arranging this.

Well done to Saffron in Year 13 who won a Highly Commended Award at the Braintree District Volunteer Awards on Thursday for her work with the Great Notley Park Run. This is excellent news and we are very proud of Saffron!

Thank you to Ellis, Ethan, Ollie, Keith, Morgan, Matilda, Aimee and Lily for giving up their Thursday evening to help out at the Year 13 Parents' evening this week. It was some of the strongest tea I have ever seen but was very much appreciated!

Mobile phones and Air pods

Please ensure that your phones and air pods are away in every lesson. Teachers should not have to remind you.

Open Evening

It is our BSF Open Evening on Wednesday 8th November from 5.30-7.30. All prefects and subject ambassadors should be there, but we would love to see as many of you there as possible to represent your subjects and talk to prospective students. Subject ambassadors, please check with your teacher to see if there is anything they would like help with in preparing for the evening.

Conduct in the Library

A chair was broken in the library this week and, judging by the broken metal legs, this was not just wear and tear. Please avoid swinging on the chairs – they are not designed as rocking chairs and you could do yourself some damage if you fall. I could share a very unpleasant story with you about someone who did this – come and ask if you are interested! If you are using the library, please be considerate as we would rather spend our budget on things to enhance your education than on replacing furniture. Linked to this, can I remind you that you should not be eating or drinking in the library. We have a large café and common room to eat in so please use them.

If you have books to return to the library, there is now a returns box on the library desk; there's no need to speak Ms Millbank, you can just leave your books in the box.

UCAS

The early entry deadline has now passed so I am now going to be reminding/nagging the rest of year 13 to get your UCAS applications in. Please ensure your research is complete (half term is a good opportunity to visit the places you are considering) and forms completed and that your personal statement has been approved by your tutors before you put it on your application form. When it is ready, tell your tutors as they then need to send their references to me – I will then ask you to come and see me to check the whole application before we send it off. It is always a huge weight off students' minds when they can finally press 'send to UCAS' so don't put this off.

Absence Line

If you are unwell, please call 01376 556300 and then choose the option for Student Absence. Several of you have reported your absence to the catering staff recently so do check you have the right number.

Laptops

If you are using one of the BSF laptops, please ensure you sign it out and then sign it back in when you return it. Ms Watson should not have to be trawling through the building picking them up after you!

Maths video of the week (apologies to Mr Blogg and keen mathematicians that I forgot to include these for the last two weeks...)

This week's link is actually a series of podcasts by +Plus Magazine, which is a maths website run by the University of Cambridge. The podcasts cover a wide range of mathematical topics, such as modelling climate change, making predictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, the dynamics of crowds and the maths of card shuffling.

You can stream the podcasts straight from the website, or download them onto a phone or device to listen to later (click on your chosen episode, then "Listen to the podcast", then either play it from there or use the three dots to download it)

Some of these podcasts may provide you with a starting point for further reading, if you are looking for topics to discuss in a UCAS personal statement or university interview. Why not choose a few that interest you to listen to over the half term break?

[Maths on the move! | plus.maths.org](https://plus.maths.org)

Opportunities for you

University of Chichester Open Days

Saturday 28 October and Saturday 18 November 9.30-3pm

Book here: [Open Days - University of Chichester](#)

[Essex University Open Day](#)

[Saturday 28 October 9 am-4pm](#)

[Book here: Open Days | University of Essex](#)

FREE lecture by the former Head Of Technology at British Cycling

The lecture will take place at Anglia Ruskin University on Wednesday 6th December from 2pm to 3.30pm. It is most suited to students with an interest in Science, Maths, Engineering or Sport.

The Team GB track bicycle for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics caused a stir on its announcement. Its wide forks and unusual titanium-carbon frame were a radical departure from convention. Professor Tony Purnell, former Head of Technology at British Cycling, will talk about how engineering helped Great Britain top the cycling medal table at the Tokyo Olympics.

Full details of the lecture and of Tony's prolific career can be found here. [Opportunity for students to hear a FREE talk by former Head of Technology at British Cycling - CSES](#)

Please email contact@cses.org.uk to book.

Essex 60th Anniversary Gameday - Saturday 18 November, 4pm

The University of Essex is turning 60 and on Saturday 18 November they are hosting their first community celebration of this special anniversary, when their women's basketball team who compete in the top-level women's basketball league in the UK, take on the Oaklands Wolves at 4pm, and their Division 3 men face local rivals Anglia Ruskin University at 6.30pm. They are offering free tickets to the event. Book here: [University of Essex 60th Anniversary Game: Essex Rebels Women & NBL D3 Men Tickets, Sat 18 Nov 2023 at 16:00 | Eventbrite](#)

The Gresham Schools Oracy Competition

Gresham College is launching its Schools Oracy Competition in October 2023 for Year 12 students. The competition promotes the art of communicating complex information in a clear, concise and compelling way.

The first place winner will receive £9,250 towards their first year of university tuition and £1,000 towards a laptop, the second place winner will receive £800 towards the purchase of a laptop, and the third place winner will receive £600 towards the same.

How to Enter

Choose one of the following topics and please make a reasoned argument:

1. How can the law aid in creating a more equal, diverse and inclusive society?
[video presentation upload link Q1](#)

2. How might Large-Language models like ChatGPT affect the future of education?
[video presentation upload link Q2](#)
3. Could genome editing consign genetic diseases to history and would that be ethical?
[video presentation upload link Q3](#)
4. Should the exploration of space be left to private companies, or to governments?
[video presentation upload link Q4](#)
5. How far is it morally justifiable to curtail personal freedoms to protect the environment?
[video presentation upload link Q5](#)
6. If you could introduce a Private Member's Bill to change one law in a UK jurisdiction, what change would you propose, and how would you argue for it in a Parliamentary speech?
[video presentation upload link Q6](#)
7. With rising mental health issues in young people, how could an emotional response to music be used to help?
[video presentation upload link Q7](#)
8. Paganism in Britain was replaced by Christianity with apparent speed and ease. What are the parallels today for religions and other societal changes?
[video presentation upload link Q8](#)
9. The prime minister has said that everyone should learn maths to age 18. Is he right?
[video presentation upload link Q9](#)
10. The wind-up radio (invented in Britain) was transformational in the developing nations in transmitting information before the internet or solar power were widespread. What area today would a small, cheap invention be best focussed on for those societies?
[video presentation upload link Q10](#)

Students should submit a recorded video presentation of **no more** than 5 minutes – the main focus should be the student speaking but you can use images, graphs, slides or other visual props that help explain your points. Shortlisted candidates will then be invited to present again in person in London, and there will be three awards (including prizes for student and the school).

To enter the competition, you need to fill out your details and a short summary citing your sources [on our entry form](#), and by uploading the video file to the corresponding folder (ie if you are presenting on question 1, upload to Q1, if you're presenting on question 2, upload to Q2 etc.).

There are some guidance and resources on their website ([How to Make A Great Presentation | Gresham College](#))

Residential Insight into University 2024 courses

Residential Insight into University courses are Industrial Cadets accredited summer schools which can help you decide which degree course might be right for you and also enhance your UCAS application. Courses run over 4 or 5 days where Yr12 students get a taster of university life and an insight into a specific STEM subject. Please see below the list of courses available for 2024, with some dates still to be confirmed:

- Materials Science at the University of Oxford, 17th June – 21st June 2024 - 4 nights residential
- Materials Science at the University of Cambridge, 30th June – 4th July - 4 nights residential
- Broad based Engineering at the University of Sheffield - 4 nights residential
- Aerospace Engineering at the University of Liverpool - 4 nights residential
- Maths at Lancaster University, 29th July – 1st August 2024 - 3 nights residential
- Mechanical Engineering at UCL - 3 nights residential
- Ocean & Earth Science at the University of Southampton, 21st July – 25th July 2024 - 4 nights residential

Additional courses coming soon.

It's just like studying at university: you will get the opportunity to experience university style lectures and work on activities and group projects with the support of academics and student mentors. Throughout the duration of the course, you will stay in halls of residence and will take part in social activities in the evenings.

For dates, cost, requirements, content of each course and the application form, please click here: [Summer Residential Courses by EDT \(etrust.org.uk\)](https://etrust.org.uk)

Applications are open for a limited time and will close on the 31st of January 2024.

Newcastle University Lower Entry Offers

PARTNERS has helped over 9,000 students study with at Newcastle University. If you are eligible to join the programme, you could receive a conditional offer from us that's typically up to three grades lower than normal entry requirements. You'll also take part in an Academic Summer School to prepare you for university study and be supported throughout your journey to Newcastle. Find out more here: [PARTNERS Supported Entry | Newcastle University \(ncl.ac.uk\)](https://ncl.ac.uk/partners-supported-entry)

Newcastle University Pathways to Medicine or Law

Pathways to Medicine and Pathways to Law are two-year programmes offered in partnership with the Sutton Trust. Year 12 students will complete a work experience placement and summer school and get academic and sector-specific support. You could also receive a conditional offer that's typically up to three grades lower than normal entry requirements. Find out more here: [Our Programmes - Sutton Trust](https://suttontrust.com/our-programmes)

Newcastle University Mini Medical School

FREE online lectures for students aged 15+, exploring the world of medical science and their latest research. Running on 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30 November (18:00) with an additional

Applying to Medicine session on 7 December. Book here: [Mini medical school | Faculty of Medical Sciences | Newcastle University \(ncl.ac.uk\)](https://www.ncl.ac.uk/mini-medical-school/)

Have a great half term. When I asked some of you what you were doing in half term, the main consensus seemed to be sleeping so I wish you all ample time to rest as well as doing some of the things mentioned in this newsletter!

We'll see you back on Monday 30th October.

Have a great weekend.



Ms C Dunton
Head of Sixth Form