



GENERAL INFORMATION APPLYING TO SIXTH FORM FOR SEPTEMBER 2019

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General Information

Applying to Beacon Academy Sixth Form

Application forms will be available on the open evening. You need to complete and return this to the Sixth Form Centre by **Monday 03 December** along with your written personal statement, indicating your proposed choice of courses and subject. (Instructions regarding your personal statement will be found in the application forms). It would also be beneficial for you to rank your order of subject choices. We cannot however guarantee that all possible combinations will be available. In most academic years we cater for the vast majority of students.

In January 2019 you will attend an interview with a member of the Sixth Form team. Your parents are also invited to attend this meeting if they wish. At this interview we will discuss your needs and the requirements of the courses you have selected. However, following this, careful changes to your courses may still be made with guidance, right up to the start of term. This may particularly apply if your GCSE results are not as expected. At this interview we will be looking very closely at your current grades. If they are very different from what is needed for your chosen subjects, we will need to discuss with you alternative possible courses.

Induction and Support

An induction day is held in **July 2019** when students will have a chance to trial lessons in the subjects they have chosen. They will spend a full day in the Sixth Form and each student will be issued an individual timetable for the day with a chance to discuss their subjects with teachers and senior sixth form staff.

During your enrolment interview at the **beginning of September 2019**, you will make your final choice of subjects and demonstrate that you are ready to commit yourself to the requirements of the courses that you have chosen to study. During Term One, there is still some flexibility to change courses; all changes are made through negotiation with the Sixth Form team and subject leaders. We must stress that the longer you leave a decision to change courses, the more difficult it is to make up lost ground, so we encourage an early dialogue with the Sixth Form team. We expect all such changes to have taken place by **the start of October**.

During your time in the Sixth Form, we support and rigorously monitor your progress. Ofsted found this to be an 'outstanding' feature of the Sixth Form. You will meet regularly with your tutor on a one to one basis to discuss and review your progress. Tutors will support you to manage your work load and reiterate the expectations of staff.

Life Beyond Beacon

Education at Beacon Academy is not just about studying hard and achieving well in your chosen courses. There are many extra-curricular opportunities to enjoy and to learn from. The Sixth Form Council represents the views of the student body and has the responsibility for organising fun and charity events, such as the Leavers Prom.

Sixth Form students also take important roles in Drama and Music performances. Many of the leading roles in whole school productions are played by Sixth Form students.

We have a long and successful record of running an amazing trip to the Gambia to support local villages. Every year students raise in the region of £25,000 to help run small scale self-help projects, such as a local school and medical centre.

Students are also encouraged to help students in the lower years through a support mentor project as well as making links with Grove Park Sixth Form. Work experience and community service is also encouraged. Post-16 sports teams continue to succeed in Football, Hockey / Netball and Rugby. We have many students playing for County teams and individuals who are nationally ranked in their sport.

This is a thriving, stimulating and exciting Sixth Form, setting and achieving high standards. We very much welcome you to be part of its continuing success.

Course Information and Entry Requirements

Students following a level 3 course normally select the equivalent of three subjects. This can be made up of three A Level subjects or a double vocational award and a further A Level. On top of this students may also select a sport. In some cases if you are doing particularly well at GCSE we may advise you to study four subjects.

In general, to progress on to A level courses, it is expected that students will have achieved five 4+ grades in any subjects which are primarily assessed through examination including 4s in English Language and Maths at GCSE. If students want to study vocational courses, the expectation is that they will have achieved five grade 4s in any subjects at level 2. This can include vocational and other coursework based courses. If students do not possess English or Maths GCSE we expect them to study the subject until they gain a grade 4. For some students this may take two years. Students should also be aware that a lack of a grade 4 in these two subjects will severely restrict choices at Advanced Level. There are also subject specific entry requirements for most subjects.

If students do not meet the entry requirements for the majority of our courses which are all at level 3, we will support them in making the right choices for further study or progression into suitable work based training. It is important to understand that we do not offer level 2 courses ourselves, which is why we will support students elsewhere with progression if they need it.

For students following a traditional A Level route you will normally take the majority of your exams in the summer term.

Students following the vocational route need to be aware that there are fewer examinations and most evidence will be produced during classes or through independent study.

It is possible for a wide variety or combination of courses and examinations to be assembled by you. Careful planning for your one/two years studying is required.

Help and advice to agree your combination of courses will be available both in school and during the interview with you and your parents. A full description of all courses we offer can be found in our online prospectus which is on the Sixth Form page of the school [website](http://www.beacon-adacemy.org):
www.beacon-adacemy.org

Choosing your programme to study

We understand that the decision about which subjects to study may well be a difficult one for you. We have an exciting range of courses on offer at Beacon at Level 3, so making your choices does mean that you will need to give it careful thought

One of the most important things to remember is that you are putting together a combination of courses for your time here, which will help you to achieve your goals and not just a collection of subjects. You will need to:

- Read the details about the subject specifications very carefully.
- Talk to your subject teacher/s about the subject at Sixth Form Level. Do not assume you know about a subject just because you have done it at GCSE.
- Look at the content and pattern of assessment. You may well be studying the subject for two years and possibly even longer.
- Talk to your Year 11 tutor about your choices.
- Be aware of your indicator grades at GCSE and read the entry requirements for each subject carefully.
- Talk to the Careers Teacher/Adviser, particularly if you have a specific career in mind. Some careers specifically request certain subject combinations and it is important that you know this before you embark on your course of study.
- Read university prospectuses looking at degree courses which may already interest you. Think ahead as some degree courses favour certain subject combinations. Sixth Form Staff will also advise you about University requirements. The UCAS website is a useful starting point for any research (www.ucas.com).
- Talk to your parents about your intended choices. They want you to be successful in your Sixth Form choices so involve them in your decision-making.

In listening to the advice given, you must remember that it is you who will be following the courses. The key to success is that you must want to do the subjects you finally choose to do.

A note about the availability of courses:

While we do everything that we can to keep to the curriculum we offer here, if any of these courses end up recruiting extremely low numbers we may not be able to run them.

We also have some courses that become very popular and while we try to open up extra classes, we may need to limit availability. In these cases we may need to offer out places depending on when students have applied and their suitability for the course. We will offer places to students in the following order:

Category 1: Students who applied for the course in November and meet the entry requirements

Category 2: Students who applied later and meet entry requirements

Category 3: Students who are close to entry requirements may be considered

Some ideas to help you

Many of you will have clear ideas about what you want to study, but some of you may want some suggestions to start with the following are a few ideas if you are very lost:

If you are interested in learning to understand the world around us

Some of the subjects which will be new to you can teach you a lot about everyday life:

Sociology is about the way that society works why some people are poor and others rich, why there is sexism and unemployment.

Psychology is about what makes people tick why some of us are passive and others aggressive, some shy, others loud.

Criminology will help you to understand crime and how it can be prevented.

Philosophy & Ethics – will help you consider ‘ultimate questions’ about yourself right and wrong and reality.

Any one of these subjects will get you thinking in new ways about your experiences during the next two years.

If all you want to do is sport

In general, it is a good idea to have more variety on your timetable, but we do understand that for some of you sport is both a passion and a definite career aim. We now offer a Level 3 Cambridge Technical Diploma in Sport & Physical Activity - this is the equivalent of two A Levels and could be accompanied by one other subject.

If you know a career you want to progress to

We now offer a number of practical A Level equivalent courses - as well as Sport, you can prepare with us for careers in Dance, Health & Social Care, Science and Media.

If you want to do a subject that you have enjoyed lower down

This is obviously often a very good idea, but you do need to be aware how different they may be at A Level. Subjects like the sciences and some of the humanities can be much more challenging than you might expect at A Level and you will need to check the entry requirements and the nature of what is covered to see if you will enjoy them as much.

What will happen if you change your mind?

The deadline for receipt of your application is **Monday 03 December 2018**. Although applications are also welcome after this date an early application will maximise the chances of your particular course combination being available in September. You will be contacted personally if we find we cannot offer your particular subject combination. You can change your mind about your courses after this date but choices will then be dependent on the agreed curriculum structure. We cannot guarantee a place in a new subject choice as it will be dependent on places available in that class. All courses are dependent on the number choosing the subject.

Three important questions to keep in mind when choosing your subjects.

- Which subjects do I like?
- Which subjects am I good at?
- Which subjects do I need?

Your answers to these three questions should guide you towards making an informed choice of subjects to study in the Sixth Form.

The Sixth Form Timetable

Initial subject choices are made on a Sixth Form Application Form. All subject options are dependent on a viable number of students choosing to follow the course.

All our students in Sixth Form are in college for at least periods one to four every day (up to lunch time) this is to allow them the time to work in a peaceful supervised environment for private study. We also expect our students to be available for period five after lunch if we need to give them extra support or if they have timetabled lessons.

Choosing Beacon Sixth Form

In the [Course Information document](#) you will find clear descriptions of all the subjects available in our academic programme next year. We believe you will find many subjects that will interest you and support your future plans, so please read it carefully.

All our courses will build on your developing strengths, stretch you intellectually and widen your horizons. In the coming months you will have the opportunity to discuss your plans with experienced and helpful staff; Subject Teachers, Tutors, Careers Advisors and Sixth Form staff. Different students have different needs, skills and interests and we believe that we can provide appropriate and challenging courses to meet the needs of all our students.

In addition to meeting your academic needs we believe we are able to offer you the appropriate environment in which to set and achieve your goals, broaden your interests and help you develop as an individual. Sixth Form is an exciting and challenging period in your education and a time of transition. We recognise that you want and are ready for greater independence, freedom and responsibility; but you also want the support and guidance of staff you know and who know you.

Beacon has an excellent reputation at all levels of Further and Higher Education. To have an institution that offers so much on your doorstep is a real advantage.

Pastoral Support

The Sixth Form maintains the quality of individual care established earlier in the lower school. All Sixth Form Students have a Personal Tutor through whom individual or small group tutorial support is given. Student progress is closely monitored and regular contact with the Tutor allows support and guidance to be given to all students. Senior Sixth Form staff are also readily available. The Sixth Form also has a full time Student Support Manager and a Wellbeing Practitioner.

Communication

All Sixth Formers have their own 'pigeon hole' to receive communication from their teachers, tutors or fellow students. We will also communicate with students via Edulink, email and text message, so please ensure you put the correct details on your application form.

Contact with Parents

We believe it is important to maintain regular contact with parents in order to keep them informed about progress. Regular tracking and Parent Consultations help to maintain parent involvement and support. We also contact parents via email when there are unexplained absences.

Careers Advice

Our Sixth Form students are further prepared for the transition to higher education and work with UCAS visits, a Wealden Careers Fair and an Enterprise Day. We have a trained Careers Adviser on site who can talk to you and your parents about your progression options at any time.

Work Experience and Community Involvement

As part of our voluntary work experience programme, we offer Year 12 students three optional weeks of work experience within local businesses. Weekly placements can also be organised if the students have a suitable gap in their timetable.

Sixth Form Study Facilities

Sixth Formers may prefer the quiet working atmosphere of the well-resourced study areas. A quiet working space with ICT facilities is also available and all students have some time when they are timetabled into this space.

Refectory

Sixth Formers have their own dining room facilities; coffee and snacks are available throughout the day.

Student Council

The Sixth Form Student Council is lead by Mr Howarth (Head of Year 13) and Dr Grossman (Head of Year 12). The Sixth Form Student Council is represented by both Year 12 and Year 13 students. The Student Council meet during tutor time on Wednesday mornings with student representatives from other year groups.

Gambia Committee

The Gambia Committee meets during Tutor time on Tuesday mornings and is open to all Year 12 and 13 students who are participating in the annual trip to distribute aid and support community projects in the Gambia. The committee is lead by Mr Howarth and has a focus on fundraising initiatives.

Beacon Sixth Form Wednesday afternoon activities - "A healthy body creates a healthy mind"

As a former Sports College we believe that it is important that all students have the opportunity to develop a sporting interest of their choice. Through research it has been proven that participation in regular physical activity improves the academic achievement of students not to mention the social and physical benefits. Most, if not all universities have a Wednesday afternoon enrichment programme, which focuses strongly on sports and indeed some of the universities will favour students with a strong background in sports.

We have a number of sports activities and try to cater for all abilities and interests. These will range from competitive team sports to recreational activities, to community sports to personal fitness.

Next year we hope to run the following activities:

Football

1st XI competing in Sussex League & Cup

Rugby

1st XV competing in Sussex Cup and National Daily Mail Cup.

Grove Park School

Students given the opportunity to work alongside Grove Park School in a variety of sports including Badminton and Trampolining.

Mixed Hockey

Competing in Sussex Schools knockout competition.

Netball

1st VIII competing in Sussex Cup and Sussex Schools League.