



T H E
GLASGOW ACADEMY

1st March 2010

Dear Parents and Pupils

I am writing to invite you to the Higher Education evening at The Academy on Tuesday 16th March, which will start at 7pm and last a little over one hour.

Mrs McCallum, our Careers Adviser, and I will take the opportunity to inform you as to how the application system for Higher Education works, outline the timetable of events at The Academy, detail the guidance available and speak briefly on a range of topics, including course and institution choice and open days. Oxbridge applications and subject-specific advice (including sport, law, medicine, art and business studies) will be dealt with on an individual basis. Dr Kate Barrie, Head of UK Recruitment for Glasgow University will speak about funding arrangements, Mr Alastair Bale, Education Liaison Manager from Cardonald College, will outline the opportunities available at Further Education colleges and a representative from ISCO will talk about Gap Year opportunities.

The important part of the evening is to quiz the guests, so please encourage your son/daughter to make the most of this opportunity. With a number of issues to cover in a relatively short time I have prepared a number of information sheets for you to consider. Although I have referred to web sites, all the information and more is in the Careers Library. The careers notice boards are regularly updated. You are welcome to discuss things with Mrs McCallum or myself in school at any stage.

Much of next term is necessarily taken up with revision and exams, yet some applications need to be completed during the first few weeks of next session. It may seem early, but it is important that Fifth Year pupils start thinking seriously about their future this term.

Choosing a University and course can be a difficult process for students and their parents or guardians. Universities do welcome parents at their open days yet very few are able to attend or are wanted by their children! We hope that the evening, along with our ongoing support throughout the session, will help make the whole process easier and less stressful.

In a recent survey over 40% of students "admitted" that their parents had influenced their choice of university. In recognising your role, we will try to provide information of particular relevance to you as parents and guardians. We hope the evening will address some of the concerns that you may have and provide you with the information you need to help and encourage your son or daughter to make the correct decision for them.

Yours sincerely

A L Evans
Assistant Rector

STUDENT FINANCE

Whether or not a student has to pay fees depends on a number of factors and the position differs for students from different parts of the UK. The Scottish Executive has abolished up front tuition fees for students living in Scotland, but everyone has to apply to SAAS in the first instance. As the funding situation depends on where your son or daughter studies in the UK I have included the web address for the main funding body, Student Awards Agency Scotland, www.saas.gov.uk. In general, if you are studying at an institution outside Scotland SAAS will "income-assess" your tuition fees.

As well as having their tuition fees met in full, new students can claim for the Young Students' Bursary depending on the level of their family income. The maximum they can get is £2,640 regardless of where the student lives during term-time. This reduces to NIL at a family income of £34,195.

There is also an income-assessed loan. The maximum available is £4,625; however, if the family income is over approximately £55,550 a year, you will only receive the minimum loan of £915 a year.

In addition to the support available from SAAS there are additional sources of help available from individual Universities. The figures quoted are for session 2009/10.

SPONSORSHIPS

It sounds almost too good to be true: tuition fees paid, substantial funds towards your living costs, relevant work experience and the promise of a decent job after you graduate. Many companies and organisations now provide financial assistance or sponsorship to help a student through university. A list and guide can be found at <http://www.everythingyouwantedtoknow.com>, but university departments will offer advice and often have their own contacts.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Hotcourses provides an extensive database and easy to use search facility to find out if you are eligible for any scholarships, bursaries and awards.
<http://www.scholarship-search.org.uk>

ISCO CAREERS EXPERIENCE DAYS

Conferences organised in Scotland on a regular basis. Recent ones have included Primary Teaching, Law, Financial Services, Marketing & Design, Sciences and Hospitality & Leisure Industry. Some pupils are attending events later this term and there will be more on offer next term. Details are published in school and can be found at www.ISCO.org.uk.

TASTER COURSES

These are courses which some universities and colleges provide to give the opportunity to experience their academic and social life on campus, before applying for a place. There are many more available at English universities, but they are popular and have to be booked early. (Lists can be found on Careers Notice Board.)

WORKSHOP CONFERENCES

These 3 or 4 day conferences enable pupils to stay at a university, sample lectures and seminars in the field that interests them and taste a little of university life so that they can make an informed decision. Subjects covered include physiotherapy, law, vet medicine, forensics and others. (Only English universities at present.) Details on www.workshop-uk.com.

HEADSTART

Headstart is a programme organised to encourage young people interested in science and maths to consider technology based careers. More details can be found on the web site www.headstartcourses.org.uk. Four-day residential experience courses are held at major national Universities (includes Scotland).

GAP YEARS

Some gap year providers have charitable status others are commercial enterprises. The whole idea is to have a good time while taking the opportunity to find your full potential and broaden horizons by working or travelling. Some will organise and provide training for challenging environmental and community projects around the world and in the UK. Gap year activities may last from a few weeks to 12 months. A good starting point is Careerscope, <http://www.careerscope.co.uk/gap/backtobasics.html>.

YEAR IN INDUSTRY

With Year in Industry you will usually start in the autumn and finish the following summer – in time to take up a deferred university place.

Jobs are mostly available in engineering, science and computing, but also in business, including personnel, marketing, business planning and other non-technical fields. Salaries £10,000 - £14,000 per year, some companies pay more. More details on www.yini.org.uk.

OPEN DAYS

If pupils are seriously considering a course or university/college they are encouraged to attend open days. Parents are welcome at these events, though maybe not by their children! The school appreciates advance notice of absence for these events, but they are so frequent that rather than asking you to write a letter a form is provided. A list of more popular open days is on a separate sheet, but www.opendays.com has all you need to know about any Open Day, including a full list of dates. Some open days are so popular that you may have to pre-register. If this is the case you can do so online.

AMAZING OFFERS

Amazing Offers is a system designed to give you information about rejection rates and average offers. The data on which these statistics are based are the actual UCAS applications for 2008 and 2007 entry of all the schools participating in Amazing Offers. (You are also given the average three A level offer in points terms. Useful, up to a point.) <http://www.amazing-offers.co.uk>.

Username: GLASGOW ACADEMY
Password: glacad

UNISTATS

Unistats is a website that is aimed at students who are looking to do further research on their preferred course. It features statistical results of universities and colleges, subjects and their content, and teaching style. There is a link from the UCAS site or go directly to <http://www.unistats.com>.

Courses and Entrance Requirements

It is almost impossible to generalise about the entrance requirements demanded by universities.

Many universities appear to offer the same courses and only on closer examination of the content are they different. Some universities will offer the same subject as an arts subject and also as a science subject and some subjects appear in combination with a large number of different subjects.

Very few subjects interview applicants. Medicine, Vet Medicine and Art are the exception. Although Edinburgh won't interview their applicants! Neither do St Andrews to any great extent; Engineering departments at Strathclyde will interview.

PLEASE NOTE: We are not aware of any Academy pupil who has been disadvantaged by Edinburgh University's widening access policy. Their published entrance requirements, however, are particularly unhelpful and should not be taken literally.

The only thing that can be stated with certainty is that the more popular the course, the higher the entrance grades demanded. Offers are made on the basis of your Higher results. Thus, it is in your interests to do as well as you can in your Highers this year. If you fail to gain the grades required in Fifth Year the university may require you to up-grade rather than continue to study the subject at Advanced Higher level in Sixth Year. This must be confirmed directly with the admissions office.

Candidates with good grades in Advanced Higher subjects will gain entry into the second year of some courses.

HND and some similar courses will gain entry into the second year or in some cases third year of some courses.

The following is just to give an idea and there may well be variations.

Some popular university courses	Higher requirements or preference (in general Higher English is required)
Accountancy	BBBB to AAAA, English and usually maths Accounts & Finance not necessary, but useful.
Architecture	BBBB to ABBBB Portfolio required, English, maths and physics desirable. Not all courses in Scotland accredited by professional body. Art recommended to get portfolio.
Art	CCC including English, portfolio required, interview.
Biochemistry	Chemistry often essential; physics sometimes preferred.
Biological Sciences, (Applied Biology, Anatomy, Bacteriology, Botany, Ecology, Microbiology, Physiology, Zoology)	Two to three from Science/Mathematics subjects. Chemistry usually required.

Business/Management	Some courses very competitive (AAAB) Most require English some ask for maths.
Computing/ICT	Huge variety of courses, most require English and maths. Computing not always necessary, but useful.
Dentistry	AAAAB (AAAAA for Dundee) at first sitting. 75% have straight As. Chemistry and further two from maths or sciences. Only two dental schools in Scotland. Work experience essential.
Education (Primary)	English B Higher and Credit maths necessary Higher maths needed for Edinburgh
Engineering	BCCC to AAAA Hugh variety of courses, but generally maths and physics.
English Lit.	Edinburgh AAAAB, most oversubscribed course in Scotland 1:74
Hotel & Catering Management	Generally no specific subject requirements.
International Relations aka Politics	AAAA St Andrews and Edinburgh
Law	AABB to AAAAB. English (and maths if done with accountancy). AH sciences not advised. Only LLB allows entry to legal profession. Glasgow and some English universities require the LNAT aptitude test.
Medicine	AAAAB at first sitting; 80% have straight As; 98% predicted to achieve As in 3 or more Adv. Highers. Chemistry required by all. Some also required further two from Mathematics or Sciences. Biology is increasingly being preferred as second science. For some it will have to be a 'crash' Higher in S6. An Arts subject is acceptable as a third as this shows breadth of interests. Work experience essential. All Scottish universities require the UKCAT aptitude test; Glasgow (in 2009 UCAT >2570) and makes offers conditional on sixth year results; BCC at Advanced Higher seems to be the norm. You can only apply to four medical schools.
Pharmacy and Pharmacology	BBBBB Chemistry + two from Mathematics and Science.
Psychology	Dependant on whether MA or BSc. Increasingly popular course at all universities (St Andrews and Edinburgh AAAB).
Therapists	Physiotherapy – AABBB English + two from maths and science. Biology and physics recommended (AAABB Queen Mgt) Sports Science – BBBB English biology chemistry. PE useful, but not necessary. Dietetics – BBCC Chemistry and another science.
Veterinary Science	<i>Realistically</i> AAAAA at first sitting plus B passes in both AH Chemistry and AH Biology. Work experience essential. Gap year not liked. Edinburgh requires some Physics.

KEY HIGHER EDUCATION RELATED DATES 2010/11

This list is not exhaustive and is intended only to give an indication of the timeline for applications. Departments may have their own open days, places on which might have to be pre-booked. In some cases once an application has been received an invitation to visit the department will be issued.

May	Optional ISCO Interviews (liaise with Mrs McCallum)
Tue 11 May	Study leave for SQA exams begins
Mon 7 June	Return to School: books collected Start S6 timetable
Wed 16 June	Stirling University Visit Afternoon (pre-registration essential, to be confirmed)
Thur 17 June	Glasgow University Open Day (Online registration is strongly encouraged)
Fri 18 June	Edinburgh University Open Day (organised by school)
18/19 June	UMIST Open Day
Thur 24 June	Dundee University Medical Open Day (pre-registration essential)
	Term Ends
Fri 2/Sat 3 July	Newcastle University Open Day (pre-registration essential)
Thur 5 August	Exam Results Day
August	Finalise Sixth Year subject choices
Wed 25 August	Term Starts: UCAS 2011 on-line application process starts
Tue 31 August	Aberdeen University Open Day
Wed 1 September	Glasgow University Open Day
Mon 6 September	Edinburgh University Open Day (book early for Vet School) Strathclyde University Open Days (pre-registration) 6pm - 8pm
Tue 7 September	Strathclyde University Open Days (pre-registration) 9.30am - 3pm
Wed 8 September	Caledonian University Open Day 10am-2:30pm and 5-7pm
Mon 20/Tue 21 September	Higher Education Convention (Science Centre, to be confirmed)
Wed 22 September	Stirling University Open Day (to be confirmed, pre-registration)
Sat 25 September	Edinburgh University Open Day (not always Vet School)
Wed 29 September	Heriot-Watt University Open Afternoon (individual visits on request) Dundee University Open Day
October	Optional ISCO Interviews
Sat 2 Oct	UMIST Open Day Newcastle University Open Day (pre-registration essential)
Mon 4 October	Academy deadline for Oxbridge, Medical and Vet application
Wed 6 October	Robert Gordon University Open Day (to be confirmed) and Wednesday afternoons on request West of Scotland, Paisley Campus Open Day 3 pm - 7pm
Wed 13, 20, 27 Oct	St Andrews University (pre-registration essential)
Wed 13 October	Abertay University Open Day (to be confirmed)
Sat 23 October	Heriot-Watt University Open Day 10am - 2pm (individual visits on request)
1,2,3, November	Duncan of Jordanstone - Art & Design Visit Day (to be confirmed)
Sat 6 November	Robert Gordon University Open Day (to be confirmed)
Wed 17 November	St Andrews University (pre-registration essential)
Mon 13 December	Academy deadline for applications
Fri 14 January 2011	UCAS deadline for applications (not confirmed)