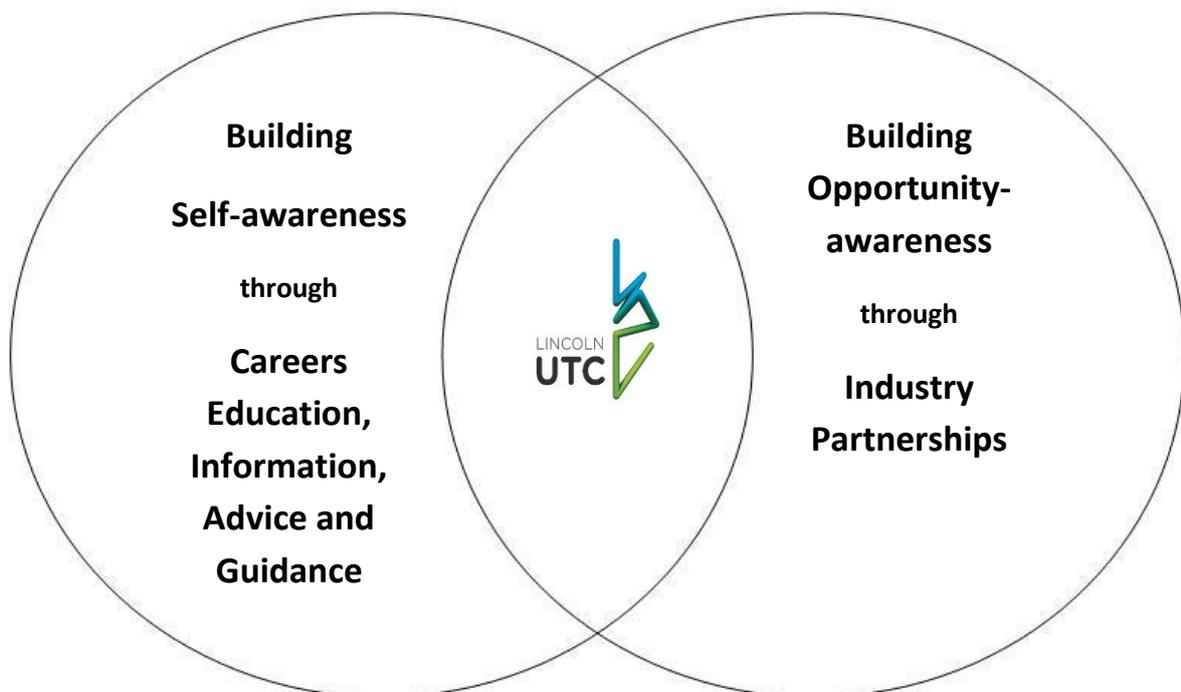


Lincoln UTC



Year 13 Careers Handbook



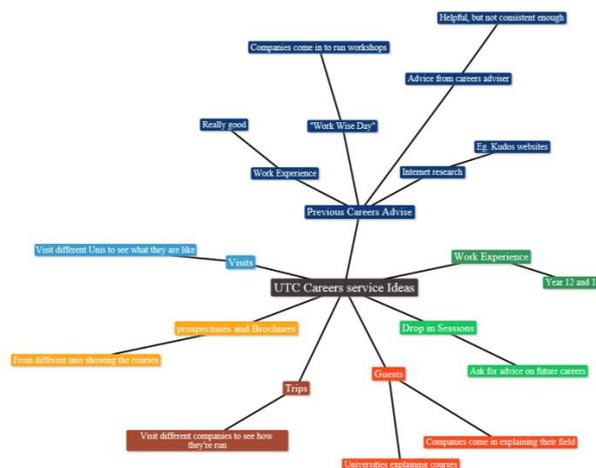


The Careers Service at Lincoln UTC aims to give each student the best possible career management skills to excel in today’s changing labour market. This is achieved through a combination of:

- Structured career education through timetabled Careers Lessons
- Employer engagement activities in curriculum time where students can get advice from professionals
- Meaningful work experience
- Up-to-date, relevant careers information both online and through the Careers Library
- One-to-one individual interviews with a Careers Guidance Professional, where they can discuss their individual career exploration

Since September, the UTC Careers Service has been involved in setting up all of the above initiatives, in conversation with our students. More information about each aspect is in this handbook.

This process has included running sessions with all years around what the students’ hopes and expectations for the UTC Careers Service involves and what should be included.



This is an example of one of the many pieces of student work which came out of this consultation process.

As a result of these sessions, the following timeline for Year 12 is currently in operation:



Y13 Curriculum Input to Easter:

Terms 1 & 2 :

UCAS Application writing –
Personal Statements

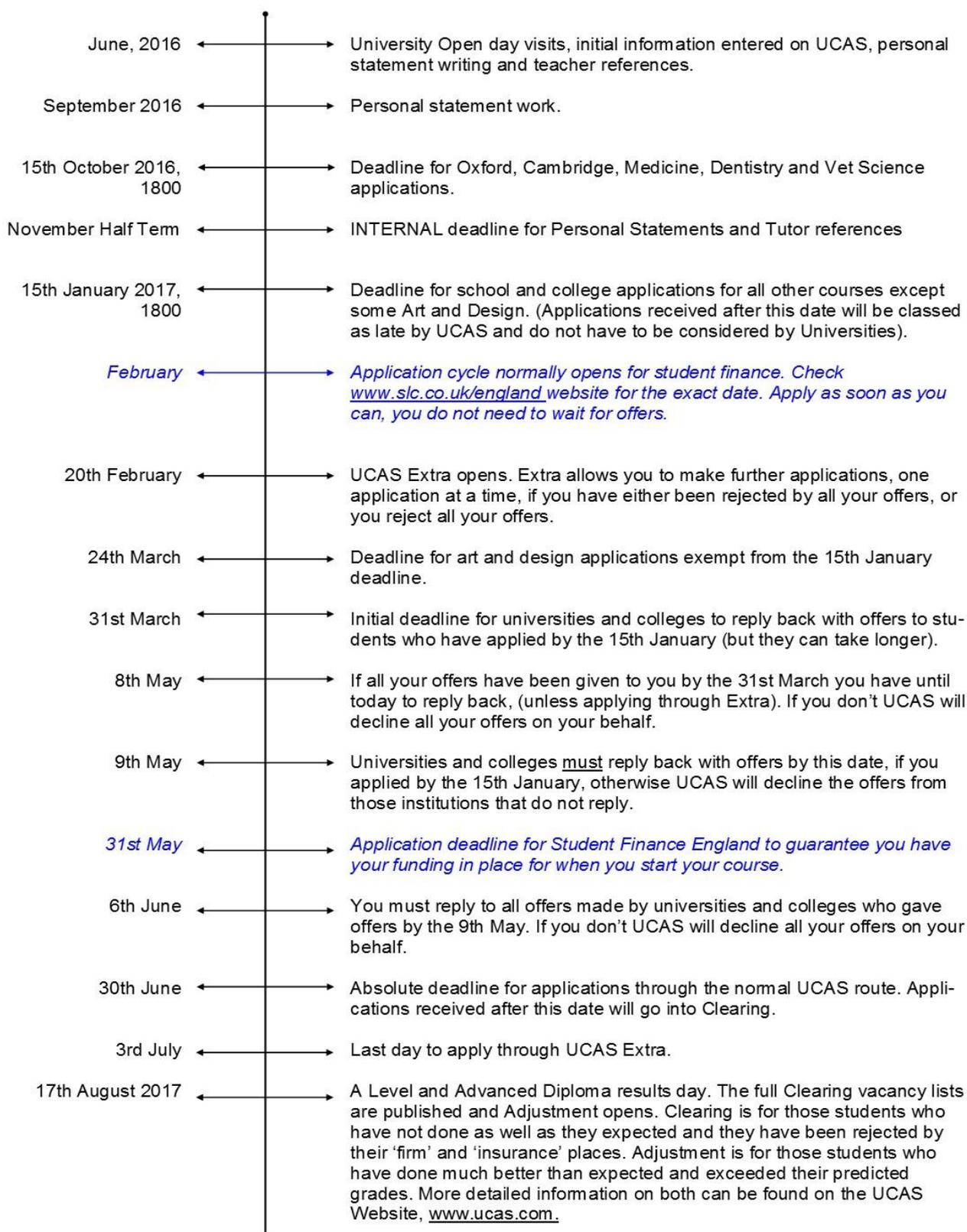
Apprenticeship Applications

Mock Interviews

Term 3 & 4 :

SMART Targets and career
action planning for the
future.

UCAS Timeline 2016/17





Completing your Personal Statement

Name:	Form:
--------------	--------------

Advice on Writing your Personal Statement

One of the best sources of help is the UCAS website itself:

www.ucas.ac.uk/students/applying/howtoapply/personalstatement/

Make sure you read through this carefully before you start.

The Personal Statement is your individual 'sales pitch' that allows you to showcase your enthusiasm and passion and to tell the universities you are applying to why they should offer you a place on the course.

There are hundreds of different resources online with suggestions on how to cover all the angles that the Admissions Tutors will be looking for, so try not to get too bogged down with reading so many different ideas that you never actually start writing.

Whatever happens, don't limit your own **individuality**; this is, after all, a personal statement and must reflect your own ideas and opinions.

The Aim of the Personal Statement

Admissions Tutors ask the following question:

Do we want this student on this course at this university?

They may break this question down into the following:

- Is the student suited to the course that they are applying for?
- Does the student have the necessary qualifications and qualities for the course?
- Is the student conscientious, hardworking and unlikely to drop out?
- Will the student do their best and cope with the demands of the course?
- What are their communication skills like?

- Are they dedicated to this course and have they researched it well?
- Do they have a genuine interest in the subject and a desire to learn more about it?

The General Layout of a Personal Statement

The entire personal statement must flow from beginning to end. It must give a real impression that you are eager to participate in the course to which you are applying and provide evidence of the academic engagement, interest, skills, abilities, experience and personal character that supports your application. Each sentence should add something new about you.

A common format for Personal Statements is shown below. Do not feel that you have to stick exactly to this format; you are writing a **personal** statement.

*** Paragraph 1:** Introduction to the subject, the aspects you are interested in and why. Ideally you should give the impression that you can see the 'bigger picture' in relation to your course.

*** Paragraph 2:** What you have done related to the subject that isn't already on your UCAS form. What is your super-curricular commitment? Show detailed areas of interest here.

Paragraph 3 There should be a short statement for each AS/A2 subject studied and each one should link to the degree course/subject through identification of relevant skills, knowledge and abilities, giving succinct, detailed examples if possible.

Paragraph 4: Relevant work experience placements might go here, emphasising their relevance to the course and how they have helped to focus you.

Paragraph 5: Your interests outside of academia, particularly those that show you are a responsible and reliable person. Demonstrating roles and responsibilities (ideally identifying skills that relate to the course, either generically or specifically); any achievements of which you are proud (e.g. raising money for charity, particular personal challenges you have overcome, specific goals you have achieved).

Paragraph 6: Here you can describe your goal of attending university and a memorable closing comment. This should be focused on your subject and should add something, rather than simply summarising what has gone before. Any gap year plans could be added here. Don't forget, this is the last thing left ringing in the Admissions Tutor's ears!!

* Paragraphs 1 and 2 may well take up most of your statement!

As so much of your Personal Statement will be specifically linked to the course you are applying for, you must have a good idea of which course you are going to study before you start writing. If you decide to change the course you are applying for you will probably need to rewrite much of your personal statement.

You will probably show your personal statement to a number of different people: your mentor, your Head of Department and Mrs Doughty. We will all have different ideas about what you have written. Remember that these are only our suggestions and it's your decision what you write.

The Facts

Your Personal Statement is 47 lines (or 4000 characters) long.

The best way to keep an eye on the length of your Personal Statement is to use the line count feature in Word; when you are doing the final editing, paste the draft document into UCAS Apply and preview it. This will tell you definitively how much space you have left (or not ...)

No formatting of any type is allowed in your personal statement, except using capital letters - so any **bold**, *italic*, or underlined words will disappear in the preview. Tabs and multiple spaces will be condensed to a single space, so it is not possible to indent lines. Single spaces at the beginning of lines will also be removed.

Some common questions

Can I write a different Personal Statement for each university I am applying to?

No, you can only submit one Personal Statement with your UCAS Form. There are a small number of exceptions to this, particularly Cambridge (who ask each applicant to fill in a Supplementary Application Questionnaire) and Durham, who allow a separate personal statement to be submitted under certain circumstances. (See www.dur.ac.uk/undergraduate/apply/personalstatement/substitute/)

Does the 4000 character limit really matter?

Yes it does. The limit is there for a reason and a key test of the process is to check whether you are able to convey your reasons for wanting to study in a clear and succinct way.

Should I mention anything about my gap year?

Yes, you should explain why you are taking a gap year and what you plan to do. Demonstrate your enthusiasm and initiative, and highlight how the activity may relate to your degree.

How far back should I go when mentioning my hobbies and interests?

Only mention things which support your application; a long list of everything you've done is much less impressive than picking one or two things and writing about the skills you have learned through them. Activities undertaken recently will certainly carry more weight than those you did in junior school.

I'm not interesting or unique ... what should I do?

Yes you are! Everyone has aspects to their personality that make them interesting and unique, it's just a case of putting them into words. You may find it helpful to ask someone close to you like a friend, relative or teacher.

How should I end my personal statement?

Don't just let it fizzle out; this is your final chance to impress. Avoid being too general by writing something like "I am looking forward to becoming a biologist"; be much more specific and end on a very positive note by closing your statement with something like "I am passionate about working with microbiology in the future and therefore am determined to make the most of my degree and achieve my ambition to become a Developmental microbiologist".

I am applying for Joint Honours. How do I construct my Personal Statement?

Structure your Personal Statement to emphasise links between the subjects; show that you have skills that are relevant to both subjects.

I am applying for different courses at different universities. How do I construct my Personal Statement?

There is no easy way to write a personal statement for two unrelated subjects and you must consider whether this is really what you want to do, as you may be seriously reducing your chances of being offered a place on either of your chosen courses if your personal statement is too vague for either discipline.

Make sure that your personal statement is your own work

You will do lots of research for your personal statement, probably including reading sample copies you can find online. Do not directly copy any of it, not even a single sentence.

Some examples of claims that have been used in numerous personal statements:

- "Fashion is not something that exists in dresses only ..." (189 times)
- "Ever since I accidentally burnt holes in my pyjamas after experimenting with a chemistry set on my 8th Birthday" (234 times)
- "My elderly and infirm grandfather ..." (175 times)

UCAS say, "We put all applications through similarity detection tests, which identify statements that have been copied from another source. Don't be tempted to copy another person's application materials, or download your personal statement from a website. There could be serious consequences to using other people's work. If any part of your personal statement appears to have been copied, we will inform all the universities and colleges that you have applied to. They will then take the action they consider to be appropriate."

Start Writing Notes about Yourself

What subject do you want to study at university? List the reasons why you are drawn to this subject.

Remember - if you can't think of any good reasons - should you really be applying for that subject?

What research have you undertaken that has led you to this degree choice?

What personal experiences have fuelled your desire to study this subject?

Do you require any particular subjects at A/AS Level to be accepted on to this course? If so, do you need to achieve a specified grade? What subjects have you studied so far?

List the skills you are developing in each AS subject that support your application.

These may be analytical, mathematical, problem solving, written, oral or simply subject specific.

What coursework, practical work or extended pieces of work have you completed as part of your AS courses?

What skills have you developed or do you expect to develop? How have these activities developed your independent learning skills?

What super-curricular activities have you completed that are relevant to your course?

Think about periodicals, journals, newspapers, books, TV programmes, lectures, study days, essay competitions, plays, clubs, societies, conferences etc.

What are your future intentions and goals? How might your chosen course help you get there?

What are your co-curricular activities both in and out of school? What skills have you gained from these that might be relevant to your application?

Time management, working under pressure, commitment, inter-personal skills, reliability, responsibility?

Have you held any positions of responsibility, won any School Prizes or been awarded any Scholarships?

Have you undertaken any relevant work experience or voluntary work? What skills did you see in action? What are your reflections on your experience?

Write down a list of words or sentences you might like to include

For example: "students of economics become problem-solvers"; "the fact is economics affects our daily lives"

Dos and Don'ts

DO:

- ✓ Research websites and prospectuses of the universities you are applying to, and see if they say anything about writing personal statements. This information would probably be written by the admissions tutors, and you can tailor your drafts around this information.
- ✓ Check the Entry Profiles for the courses you're interested in on UCAS Course Search. Universities set out the qualifications and experience they are looking for here.
- ✓ Use the resources available in the Careers Room.
- ✓ Brainstorm your ideas on paper before attempting to write anything.
- ✓ Make it personal.
- ✓ Be positive, interesting and enthusiastic: you can have perfect grades, hundreds of extra-curricular activities and be a really great person, but if the admissions tutor feels you aren't passionate about your degree, you won't get a place.
- ✓ Have an opening that makes the admissions tutor want to read to the end.
- ✓ Give specific examples throughout.
- ✓ Use language that makes you sound enthusiastic about your course and portrays you as an interesting person.
- ✓ Balance the Personal Statement between your academic and co-curricular commitments. A sensible split could be 60:40 academic: co-curricular, although Oxbridge applicants should have a split closer to 70:30.
- ✓ Have a conclusion that means the admissions tutor will remember you and hopefully recommend you for an offer.
- ✓ Write at length in your early drafts and then edit down as you approach the final version.
- ✓ When proof-reading for the first time, read through what you've written slowly and try to read it from someone else's point of view.
- ✓ Once you have proof-read and corrected, get someone else (family or friend) to read it.
- ✓ Make your corrections immediately; don't give someone a draft to proof-read if it has amendments already scribbled on it.
- ✓ Expect to produce several drafts before being totally happy. Save your personal statement carefully each time so you are certain that you are always working on the most current version.
- ✓ Leave a line between paragraphs if possible.
- ✓ Blow your own trumpet!

Dos and Don'ts

DON'T:

- × Exaggerate or lie.
- × Start every sentence with 'I'.
- × Open with the statement "From an early age I have always been interested in ..." This is the most common opening of all Personal Statements.
- × Include every single award you have won since the age of 5.
- × Repeat information found elsewhere on your UCAS Form (e.g. "I studied Biology, Chemistry, Geography and English at AS Level")
- × Fill it with vocabulary that you've found through a thesaurus because you've already used the word 'enjoy' too many times, unless they are words you would otherwise use (e.g. beware of "I revel in ...", "I am utterly transfixed by ...", "I am spellbound when ...")
- × Write it as one large block of text, even though you can fit more words in this way. Stick to paragraphs as these are easier to read.
- × Worry if your first draft sounds disjointed.
- × Underestimate the importance of your spelling, punctuation and grammar. Little mistakes can have a large impact on your application.
- × Feel you have to fill every single one of the 4000 characters.
- × Just rely on a spellchecker; proof-read as many times as possible.
- × Waffle on about things which aren't relevant. If you feel you are starting to ramble, take a break and return to your statement when you are feeling more focused.
- × Expect to be able to write your Personal Statement whilst watching TV. This is your future, you only get one chance, and it's down to you!
- × Show your Personal Statement to more than 3 members of staff; you will simply get overloaded with suggestions and end up creating a statement that is incoherent and staccato.
- × Leave it to the last minute ...

Apprenticeships

There is no prescribed process for applying for Apprenticeships as with University through UCAS. Each one has a different application process and timeline and there are hundreds of options!

To ensure your child has all the information to decide if an apprenticeship is right for them, and to begin looking in the right places, the UTC will be delivering several talks from apprenticeship providers to cover all of this vast and ever changing picture.

Research shows that just over 80% of school leavers make their key careers decisions in conjunction with their parents. However, in some circumstances there is a knowledge gap between parents' awareness of their children's options and what is available to students at the end of school or Sixth Form. The AllAboutSchoolLeavers.co.uk School & College Leaver Careers Market 2014 annual research report found that only 19.25% of parents are aware of school leaver programmes and only 12.83% had heard of a sponsored degree as an option available to their children. I have attached the 'Your Childs Options Explained' guide produced by allaboutschoollleavers.co.uk to this email for further more in depth information on this.

In the meantime, there are a number of useful websites you and your child can use to begin searching:

www.allaboutschoollleavers.co.uk – This is a useful guide to your child's options after leaving school and is focused on apprenticeships, school leaver programmes and sponsored degree routes

www.apprenticeships.gov.uk – This is the central government Apprenticeships website, and although it is fairly comprehensive, there is no obligation for employers to advertise on this site. Rolls Royce

www.ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk – This website has more useful information on: Apprenticeships; School Leaver Programmes; Sponsored Degree Programmes; Gap Year Programmes and Traineeships

www.notgoingyouni.com – This is a useful website and has lots of useful information on local, regional and National apprenticeship provision

<http://www.siemens.co.uk/careers/en/students/apprenticeships/our-apprenticeships.htm> - Information on Apprenticeships with Siemens. The closing date for applications is always 1st March, regardless of the day

<http://www.rolls-royce.com/careers/students-and-graduates/apprenticeships.aspx> - Information on Apprenticeships with Rolls Royce.

This only intends to provide a flavour of all the many and varied apprenticeship opportunities available in today's ever-changing labour market. The intention at Lincoln UTC is to provide a comprehensive service to enable students to make an informed decision about whether an apprentice route is right for them, and then to help find the right route. Despite Central Government promises, this process is still complex and diverse, with new changes being announced and implemented every day.

At the UTC we will always do our very best to provide up-to-the-minute information on opportunities available – but this comes with the warning that things often change and develop overnight with apprenticeship! Therefore we will work with you and your child to develop the necessary career management skills through Innovation to stay on top of this rapid change.

Careers Guidance Interviews

At Lincoln UTC, we use external Careers Advisers from Nottingham Trent University, in addition to Mrs Doughty Head of Careers, to offer a truly independent and impartial Careers Service to our students. A big part of the current term's work is on individual Careers Interviews, resulting in an individual Action Plan. The interview process is explained below. All Y12 students will have had a Careers Interview and a Career Action Plan by May Half term 2016. A sample Action Plan is included at the end of the report. From Easter 2016 all Y12 students will have a one-to-one Guidance interview with Mrs Doughty to review the actions from their external careers interview and make plans for work experience and future options. The action plans from these will be emailed out to the students and shared with parents if students agree to this.



Sample Action Plan

Name: Address: Tel:	Date of Interview: Young Person Details: Date of Birth: Young Person email:
Career aim(s):	
Action to date:	
Education/ Training required to achieve career aim:	
Action- I will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	By:
My Adviser will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	By:

Signed (Young Person):

Adviser's Name: Mrs Doughty

Signed (Adviser): AHS Doughty

