



Wednesday 1st October 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Year 12 Careers Activities for 2025-26

We hope your child is settling in well into Year 12. As they embark on their Sixth Form journey, we are committed to supporting them in developing essential employability and career management skills. Our goal is to empower students to make informed decisions about their future beyond school. To this end, we want to advise you of the enriching programme of career-related activities we have planned for them throughout the 2025–26 academic year, **so that you may encourage them to actively participate in these opportunities.**

Key Dates and Activities:

- **Tuesday 30th September 25** – Four-week FREE Public Speaking Course led by business advisor and coach Erica Mackay. (30 spaces – now full). If your child missed this, please encourage them to watch out for other advertised opportunities to develop this valuable life skill.
- **w/c 20th October 25** – CV Building: Briefing in assembly followed by CV creation during PSHE sessions. (ALL)
- **Friday 14th November 25** – Mock Interview & CV Clinic: Interviews and CV reviews by industry professionals with students receiving supportive personalized feedback. (ALL)
- **Tuesday 26th November 25** – LinkedIn Training: Guidance on creating and optimising professional profiles for networking and job searching. (ALL)
- **Thursday 19th March 26** – CareersFest @ Kassam Stadium: School trip to Oxfordshire's Careers Fair with 80+ employers offering insights and late work experience opportunities. (ALL)
- **Thursday 11th June 26** – UCAS Discovery Event @ Winchester University: School trip with access to over 100 universities and academic taster sessions. (ALL)
- Further opportunities to deepen their understanding of possible careers and HE options and increase odds of securing them:
- **Assembly inspirational talks** - A programme of industry speakers has been arranged twice a month on a variety of topics to inspire career ideas and broaden their horizons.
- **Career Fairs** organised by WOSCP¹: Wednesday 3rd December 25 @ Abingdon & Witney College, Witney Campus and Thu 12 Mar 26 @ Marlborough School. Explore apprenticeships, further education, and work experience opportunities. (Students to travel independently). More information is to be issued closer to the date.

¹ WOSCP: West Oxfordshire School Careers Partnership, Gosford Hill collaborates with 7 other schools to organize these events



- **Networking Events:** Sixth form students are invited to meet employers during career events for younger years. These informal breakfasts help build confidence and communication skills, plus offer the chance to develop leadership and organizing skills by supporting the running of these events. Advertised on Google Classroom.
- **Super-curricular activities:** Regularly posted **on Google Classroom**. Students should sign up for notifications and then check frequently for activities that deepen their understanding of careers of interest and then use them to strengthen personal statements and apprenticeship and job applications. These include virtual work experience opportunities. These should be recorded on Unifrog (in Activities) with what they learnt from these experiences, for later reference.
- **Mock Assessment Centres sessions:** Run by Enterprise Oxfordshire, in various local locations, but with limited spaces. A must-do for students considering apprenticeships. Dates will be advertised on Google Classroom once made available.
- **Other leadership and volunteering opportunities:** These include student council, PALs, and weekly volunteering (minimum 1 hour). These experiences build employability skills. Advertised on Google Classroom

Work Experience – 6th to 10th July 2026:

Year 12 students are expected to participate in a mandatory work experience week. This is a valuable opportunity to explore career interests and develop workplace skills. **We strongly advise students to secure placements before the Christmas break**, as availability notably reduces after this period due to high competition with other schools and colleges. These placements are unpaid and students should arrange their own placements, which is part of the learning experience and practice for the job market. See Appendix A for more information and tips on how to arrange.

Unifrog Platform:

We are using Unifrog to manage health and safety checks for placements. Students will be guided on how to use the system. Once a placement is agreed, students must enter details on Unifrog, which will be verified by the employer, parent, and school, so correct entry by the students is essential.

Parents [can access Unifrog](#) using the code **GOHfamily** (valid until 1 Dec and note only for Gosford Hill families). In addition to supporting placements, the platform offers a wealth of information on different careers, higher education options, super-curricular resources, webinars, and more.

Personal Guidance Sessions:

All students have access to one-on-one sessions with a qualified careers advisor (me). These meetings help students create personalised plans for their future, whether they have a clear idea or not. Sessions can be booked at any time.



We are dedicated to providing your child with the best possible support as they navigate their future options. Please encourage them to take full advantage of the opportunities available during their time in Sixth Form. Reminders will be in parent bulletins and newsletters.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs S Zajac
Careers Lead

Supplementary note on supporting your Year 12 to find a work placement:

Please help your child to think about what they want from the experience. This doesn't have to be their forever career, just a starting point, but will be invaluable for increasing their awareness of their options and their confidence in their employability skills.

Identifying type of placement to seek

- **Identify Interests and Strengths:** Talk through their favourite subjects, hobbies, and activities. What are they good at? What do they enjoy doing? A placement that aligns with their interests will be more rewarding. We kindly ask that Year 12 students seek experiences other than local primary schools so these placements are more available to our Year 10s, who also have the same week.
- **Define Objectives:** Discuss what they hope to gain from the placement (e.g., insight into a specific career, developing communication skills, understanding a professional environment). This will help them focus their search.

How to find a placement

- **Leverage personal networks:** The best placements are often found through existing contacts, but encourage your child to be the one driving the search. Use family networks, your work network, LinkedIn, get them to ask family friends, their sports coaches etc if they know of opportunities for placements that might align with their interests.



- **Speculative Approach:** Help them identify local companies in a field they're interested in and support them in making a direct approach.
 - **Find a Contact:** Use google maps to identify local relevant companies. Suggest they look on company websites or call the receptionist to find the name of the most appropriate person (e.g., HR, an office manager, or the Head of a relevant department). Getting a relevant contact name to call or email can make a significant difference whether they receive a response.
 - **Draft an Email:** Guide them to write a brief, polite, and professional message explaining who they are, their Year 12 dates of availability, and why they are specifically interested in their company. Students should contact employers themselves.

Finding placements through the speculative route can be challenging, so students should apply to several to increase chances of success, as employers have no obligation to offer. Help students to track applications and diarise follow up in a week if they have not heard anything, by calling, as these requests are often overlooked.

Please note students had particular difficulty last year securing placements with organisations such as local accountancy firms, architects, solicitors, healthcare, so encourage them to think more widely about the types of skills they are looking to acquire and where else they could get these.

School support : We will provide further guidance on the above, but if they are stuck and need help secure a placement, they can drop into my office or email szajac@gosfordhillschool.org to discuss their approach.