



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM
SCHOOL

PROSPECTUS

SHAPE YOUR FUTURE

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM SCHOOL
SIXTH FORM



WELCOME FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Having completed our first full year of operations, and seeing our School double in size, it is a great privilege to be introducing this new prospectus for the University of Birmingham School's Sixth Form.

We now have students in both Year 12 and Year 13, and, at the end of this year, our students will sit the A level exams which they will have spent two years studying for. But life at the University of Birmingham Sixth Form is about far more than exams and academic success. I hope that reading this prospectus and visiting us at an Open Evening event, you will be as excited as I am about the prospect of joining us.

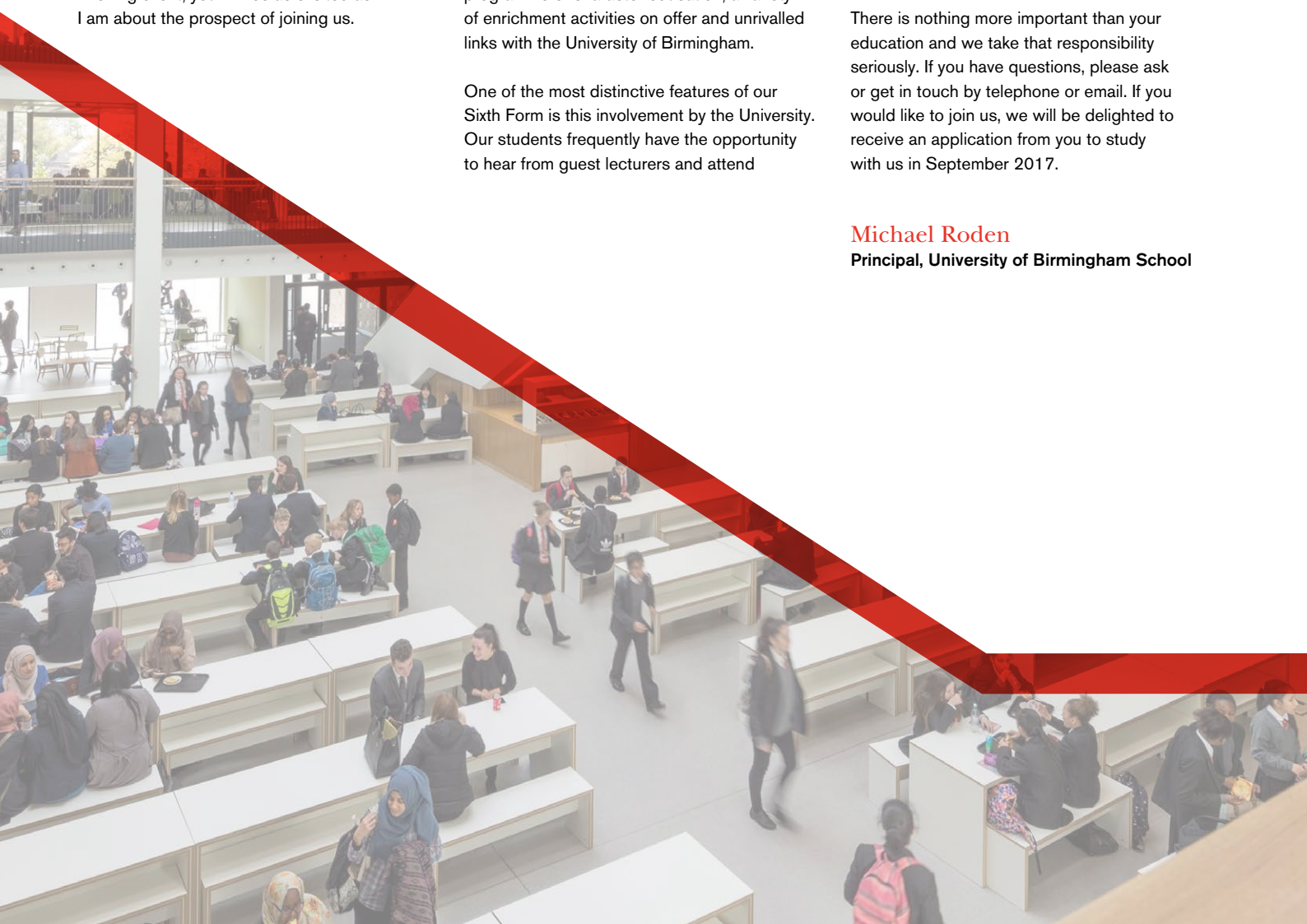
I understand that making the choice about where and what to study in the Sixth Form is a major decision for students and their families. If you are considering applying for University in the future, then we believe that the University of Birmingham School will give you the best possible start, with an academic range of subjects to study at A level, a bespoke programme of character education, a variety of enrichment activities on offer and unrivalled links with the University of Birmingham.

One of the most distinctive features of our Sixth Form is this involvement by the University. Our students frequently have the opportunity to hear from guest lecturers and attend

masterclasses run by University academics. They also take part in University-sponsored challenges to develop knowledge and skills in specific subjects and have outstanding careers and study skills guidance available to them. Our students also have access to admissions tutors to help to guide and inform their choices for University entry.

There is nothing more important than your education and we take that responsibility seriously. If you have questions, please ask or get in touch by telephone or email. If you would like to join us, we will be delighted to receive an application from you to study with us in September 2017.

Michael Roden
Principal, University of Birmingham School



WELCOME FROM THE SIXTH FORM MANAGER



Your Sixth Form years will be the most exciting years of your School education.

At the University of Birmingham School our vision is simple; that all our Sixth Form students get into their choice of University, vocational training or employment, and that they go there fully prepared and confident for the fantastic challenges and opportunities that await them.

Our Sixth Form is a friendly, thriving and exciting place to study. As a student here you will combine a busy academic timetable along with five hours a week of enrichment, as well as lunchtime talks and seminars, after-school sports clubs, volunteering opportunities and numerous trips to the University of Birmingham for lectures and workshops.

Sixth Form students are at the very heart of our school. Our expectations are high. We see Sixth Form students as exemplary role models in the school who will demonstrate the highest standards of behaviour and attitude. You will receive inspirational teaching as part of a Sixth Form that cares about your personal development and will do everything it can to ensure you reach your potential.

The University of Birmingham School offers a Sixth Form experience that is unique in our city. We are proud of what our Sixth Form students have already achieved and we are excited about our future.

Liam Dwyer
Sixth Form Manager



AN INTRODUCTION TO CHARACTER EDUCATION IN THE SIXTH FORM

As students progress into the Sixth Form, we want to inspire and guide you in the development of your character.



Exploring the specific issues that confront everyone making the transition from late childhood to young adulthood, we provide opportunities to take greater personal responsibility and to continue to grow into authentic freedom. They include identifying meaningful and worthwhile future pathways in life, different kinds of fruitful engagement with the world around you and sustained exposure to, and reflection on, the challenges of a balanced adult life.

In addition to a diet of 'hard currency' A levels, you will follow a taught course that aims to build character which is complemented by the much more practical and experiential approaches, whether on the sporting field or stage, or in concert hall or debating pit, or in school or the community. Here, character will be both 'taught'

and 'caught' through our ethos and values. Indeed, we will look increasingly to the Sixth Formers to model the role of being a good character to those in the lower School – a great privilege and task, no doubt! Such an approach is both broad based and pervasive; it should deepen your insight into the morally relevant features of situations, enhance your own self-awareness when confronting them, and provides ample opportunity to practise and reflect on how to strengthen and integrate more fully the virtues required to meet such challenges.

Our approach continues to cut deeper than mere 'study or employability skills' or 'knowledge about civics', important as these are. We aspire to guide our students in becoming fully flourishing individuals, who live with increasing good sense, courage, fairness, gratitude

and self-control. This will naturally lead you to becoming high performing, active and engaged citizens, amongst other things that will not only place you on firm footings when confronting the complex and varied challenges of adulthood, but will also furnish you with enduring traits and worthwhile habits of character.

Professor James Arthur

**Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor (Staffing) and
Director of the Jubilee Centre for Character
and Virtues, University of Birmingham**

“When you leave us at 18 we aim to have inspired, engaged and supported you in cultivating all that you need for a perfectly balanced, flourishing adult life.”

**Professor James Arthur, Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor (Staffing)
and Director of the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues,
University of Birmingham**

STUDYING A LEVELS

The University of Birmingham School offers a traditional academic curriculum in the Sixth Form. We want our students to have the widest range of options when they consider their next steps into employment or higher education so we offer a focussed range of A levels. Our curriculum emphasises the core disciplines, often referred to as the 'Facilitating Subjects' preferred by Russell Group universities.

SUBJECTS OFFERED

Subject	Examination Board
Art and Design	OCR
Biology	OCR
Chemistry	AQA
Computer Science	OCR
English Literature	AQA B
French	AQA
Geography	Edexcel
History	OCR
Mathematics	Edexcel
Further Mathematics	Edexcel
Music	Edexcel
Physics	AQA
Product Design (Resistant Materials)	Edexcel
Religious Studies	OCR

At Sixth Form, you will study three or four AS levels and three A2/A levels. Each A level course is led by an experienced subject leader, supported by a team of highly qualified teachers who bring outstanding subject knowledge and an impressive commitment to the ethos of our ambitious and distinctive School. As well as being taught by outstanding secondary school teachers, University of Birmingham School students benefit from the wide-ranging high-level research already undertaken by teachers in the school, as well as their links to research communities at the University of Birmingham and beyond.

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE COURSES OFFERED, YOU CAN VISIT THE RELEVANT PAGES ON UCAS PROGRESS OR VISIT THE EXAMINATION BOARD WEBSITES. OTHER SUBJECTS MAY BE AVAILABLE IN THE FUTURE DEPENDING ON DEMAND.



IS UOB SCHOOL RIGHT FOR YOU?

- 1** Do you want to be taught by highly qualified teachers who are there to inspire and support you inside and outside of lessons?
- 2** Do you want to be taught in a modern, well-resourced, newly built School?
- 3** Do you want the chance to choose from over 30 enrichment options, from musical theatre to karate to cooking on a budget?
- 4** Do you want to be part of a cohort of students with high aspirations and a drive to learn?
- 5** Do you want access to a world-class University and benefit from their physical and intellectual resources?
- 6** Do you want to go to a School that focusses on developing you as a person of character, not just someone who can pass exams?

There are a vast range of new opportunities available. We have 5 hours of enrichment every week, which broadens our horizons from the traditional academic study. I've done debating and philosophy this year. I think the wide range of opportunities offered is not something you can really turn down.

Daanish Malik

OUR SCHOOL DAY

Time of day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8.25am	In School, ready to go to Tutor Time				
8.30am	Tutor Time				
9.00am	Period 1				
10.00am	Morning Break				
10.20am	Period 2				
11.20am	Period 3				
12.20pm	Lunch				
12.45pm					
1.05pm	Enrichment	Period 4	Enrichment	Period 4	Enrichment
2.05pm	Break			Break	
2.20pm	Period 5	Period 5		Period 5	Period 5
3.20pm	Period 6	Period 6		Period 6	Period 6
4.20pm	Years 7–11 – Tutor Time / Sixth Form – Home Time				
4.30pm	End of School Day				
4.30–5.30pm	(Optional) Independent Study				

LINKS WITH A WORLD-CLASS UNIVERSITY

A distinctive characteristic of the Sixth Form experience at the University of Birmingham School is the involvement of the University of Birmingham.

Masterclasses and guest lectures are an important part of the curriculum and you will have access to both the intellectual and physical resources of the University to enhance your studies and coursework (eg, library, archives, art collections, laboratories etc).

“We always have lecturers come in from the University of Birmingham, so having that experience has set us up with a taste of what it’s like at university and what we should expect.”

Saffron Taylor

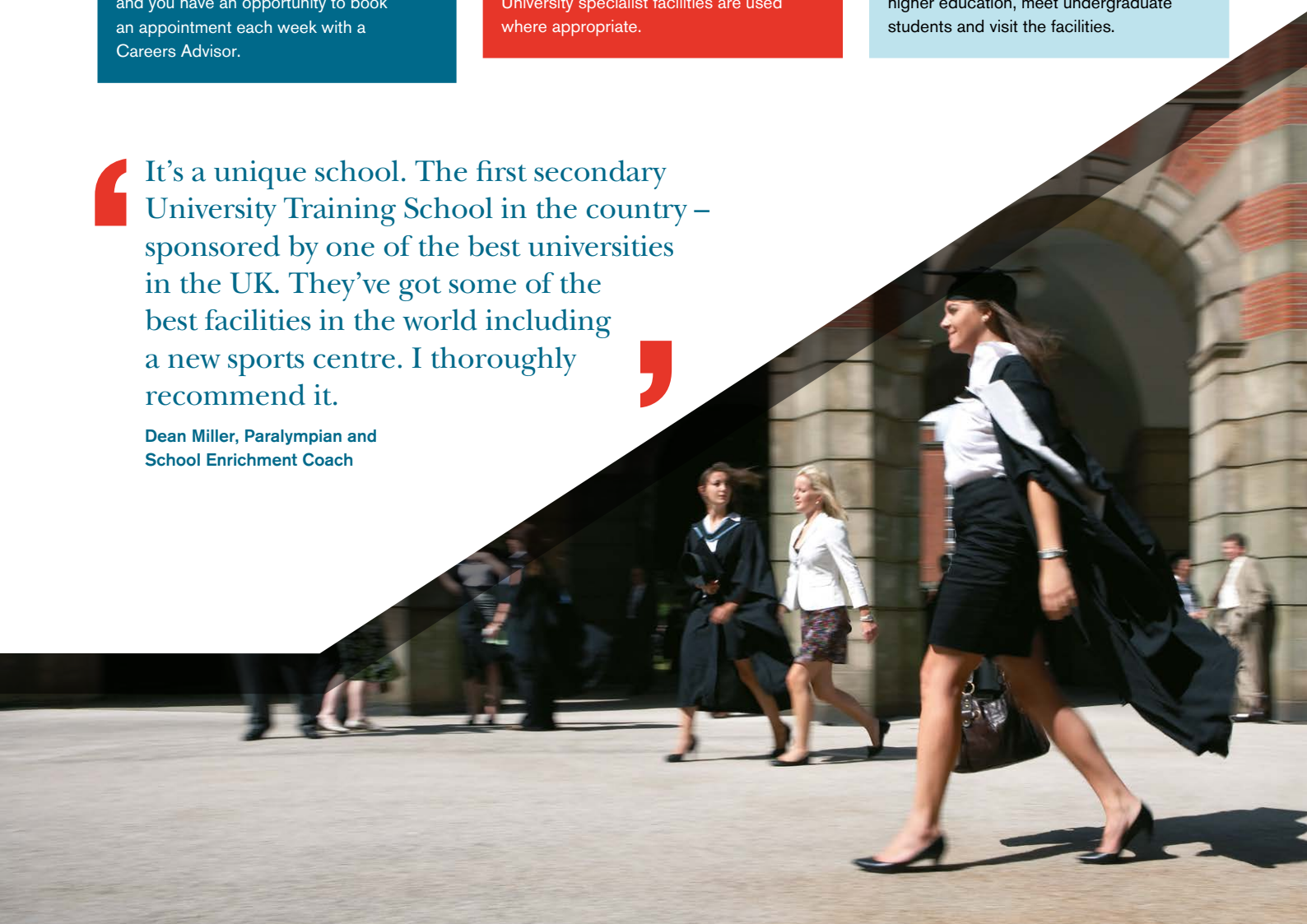
The award-winning University Careers and Employability team support the provision of expert advice and guidance, and you have an opportunity to book an appointment each week with a Careers Advisor.

Beyond your core subjects, University staff also work with teachers and students to enhance your Sixth Form experience. University specialist facilities are used where appropriate.

At the beginning of Year 12, the whole cohort visits the University of Birmingham to receive a talk about progression into higher education, meet undergraduate students and visit the facilities.

“It’s a unique school. The first secondary University Training School in the country – sponsored by one of the best universities in the UK. They’ve got some of the best facilities in the world including a new sports centre. I thoroughly recommend it.”

Dean Miller, Paralympian and
School Enrichment Coach

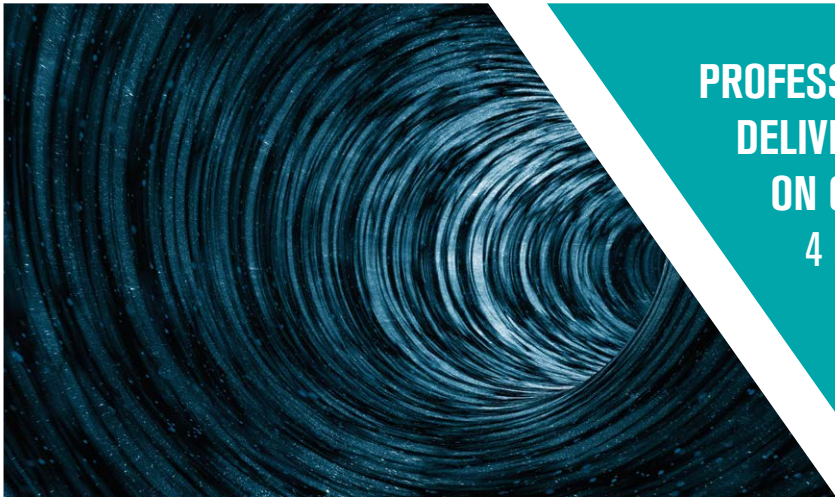


A FEW EXAMPLES OF OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM



SIXTH FORM STUDENTS WENT
TO A LECTURE WITH **DR KEVIN
FONG** ABOUT HUMAN SPACE
EXPLORATION AND SPACE
MEDICINE AT THE UNIVERSITY
OF BIRMINGHAM GREAT HALL.

PROFESSOR KRISTJAN
KRISTJANSSON FROM THE
JUBILEE CENTRE DELIVERED A
GUEST LECTURE TO OUR YEAR 13
RELIGIOUS STUDIES STUDENTS
ON ARISTOTELIAN VIRTUE ETHICS.

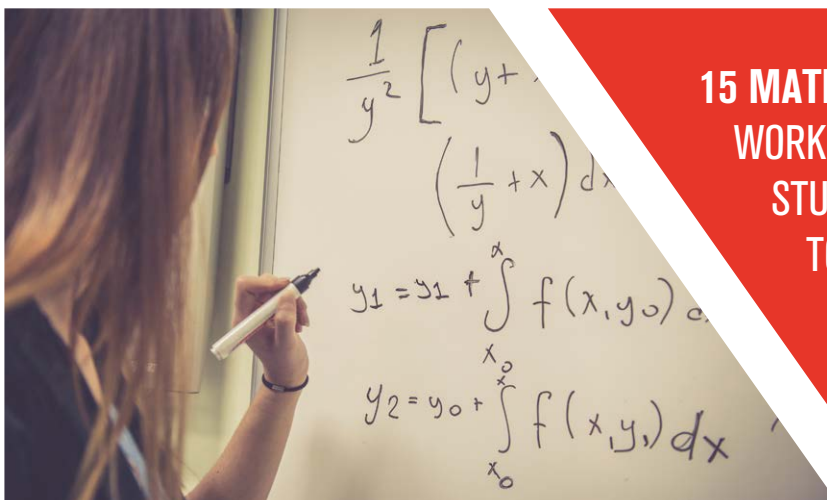


PROFESSOR ALBERTO VECCHIO
DELIVERED A LUNCHTIME LECTURE
ON GRAVITATIONAL WAVES, JUST
4 MONTHS AFTER THEY WERE
FIRST DETECTED BY LIGO.



**HEAD OF SCHOOL, PSYCHOLOGY AND
CHAIR OF COGNITIVE NEUROSCIENCE
PROFESSOR KIMRON SHAPIRO
GAVE A LUNCHTIME LECTURE,
ENTITLED THE BRAIN:
THE FINAL FRONTIER.**

**MEDICINE STUDENTS
DELIVER CPR TRAINING
TO SIXTH FORM DURING
ENRICHMENT SESSIONS,
AND SUPPORT SIXTH FORMERS
TO DELIVER CPR TRAINING TO
YOUNGER CHILDREN.**



**15 MATHEMATICS UNDERGRADUATES
WORKED WITH A LEVEL MATHEMATICS
STUDENTS DURING ENRICHMENT
TO GIVE ADDITIONAL TUTORING.**

CHARACTER EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT

Enrichment

All students undertake activities from a very wide choice on Mondays and Fridays. These include: politics and debating societies, photography club, foreign film club, chess, running club, musical theatre, karate and many more. Students can also join a thinking skills group in order to be well-prepared for selection tests (UKCAT, LNAT etc.) for some of the most demanding courses at university. Our extended enrichment afternoon on Wednesdays allows all Sixth Formers to undertake volunteering and work experience both within and beyond the school, to take part in outdoor and survival skills programmes, to become digital leaders for the school and to learn cooking and budgeting skills in preparation for life at university.

Sport

Sixth Form students will be able to choose from a programme which includes rugby, hockey, British Military Fitness, badminton, yoga, running and volleyball on Monday and Friday enrichment sessions. All students also take part in annual College sporting events, such as Bud's Run, Sports Day and our Rugby Festival. They also have the opportunity to become Sports Leaders, and learn coaching skills, supporting physical education with younger years. Students also benefit from facilities and expertise at the University of Birmingham.

Leadership

Our Sixth Form students are given the opportunity to contribute to the leadership, management and on-going development of the School. This could be mentoring of younger pupils; fulfilling supervisory and representative duties; taking part in College and whole School activities; being involved in the recruitment of teaching staff; and contributing to the development of teaching and learning. This list is not exhaustive and opportunities continue to arise as the School grows – we welcome suggestions and proposals from Sixth Form students for activities they would like to lead.

Personal Learning and Development

Our core curriculum is supported by our daily Personal Learning and Development (PLAD) Programme, developed in liaison with the world-leading Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, based at the University of Birmingham. The PLAD programme aims to develop character virtues as well as skills which will benefit students' A level work and also support a successful start to higher education, employment or professional training. These skills will include how to use an academic library, effective research methodology and appropriate referencing of written work.

Support

We have twelve forms of approximately 18–25 students in Year 12; students are allocated to ensure each form is gender balanced and includes a mix of students from secondary schools across the city. As a result of the size of our forms, your Form Tutor will get to know you very well over the course of your two years in Sixth Form here. They will be responsible for writing references for UCAS or employment (in liaison with the Sixth Form Manager and Senior Vice Principal), as well as being available to support you on a daily basis. You will be supported in:

- research and study skills;
- individual strategies to aid confidence and progression;
- university entrance planning and applications;
- writing references for UCAS or employment;
- career planning;
- monitoring of progress;
- leadership and independence;
- team work;
- communication skills;
- developing a healthy lifestyle and work/life balance.

Your subject teachers will guide and support you on an individual basis in your chosen subjects. AS and A level consultation evenings are run to support you if encounter difficulties, where you and your parents/carers will be invited to meet your teachers and Form Tutor.

I feel that enrichment is a brilliant thing to get to do. It's something that's away from your A levels and the stress of exams, and you get to explore things that you're genuinely interested in.

Lydia Kendall



WANT TO KNOW MORE?

PLEASE GET IN TOUCH IF YOU
HAVE ANY QUERIES. EMAIL:

WELCOME@UOBSCHOOL.ORG.UK

JOINING US FOR SIXTH FORM

At the University of Birmingham School, our large, selective Sixth Form provides outstanding opportunities for students across the city and region.

Applications can be submitted from Autumn 2016, using UCAS Progress online. You can find the link via our School website. The closing date for Sixth Form applications will be 27 January 2017 and applications received after this date will only be considered once applications have been processed for those who have applied before 27 January 2017 (applying within the prescribed timescale.) Further application details can be found on our website.

To be eligible for entry into the Sixth Form, you will be expected to meet the minimum academic entry requirements:

- At least a Grade B at GCSE in the subjects you want to study at A level, or the equivalent in the new grading system, at least a Grade 5.
- At least a Grade A in associated subjects if your chosen subject is not offered at GCSE such as an A in Mathematics to study Computer Science (A* in Mathematics if you wish to study Further Mathematics).
- At least 5 GCSEs, in any subject, at Grade B, or the equivalent in the new grading system, at least a Grade 5.
- At least a Grade C at GCSE in English Language and Mathematics or equivalent in the new grading system, at least a Grade 4.
- If the School is oversubscribed, you may need to achieve at least a Grade A at GCSE in the subjects that you want to Study, or equivalent, typically at least a Grade 7 in the new grading system.

There are no geographical criteria for the Sixth Form so where there are more applicants that satisfy the academic entry requirements than we have places available, priority will be given in the following order:

1. Pupils with either an Education, Health and Care Plan or a statement of Special Educational Needs naming the University of Birmingham School and who meets the minimum academic entry requirements.
2. Looked-after children or children who were previously looked-after who meet the minimum academic entry requirements.
3. Children eligible for the Pupil Premium who meet the minimum academic entry requirements. In the event of two or more applications that cannot otherwise be separated, the School will use random allocation as a tie-break.



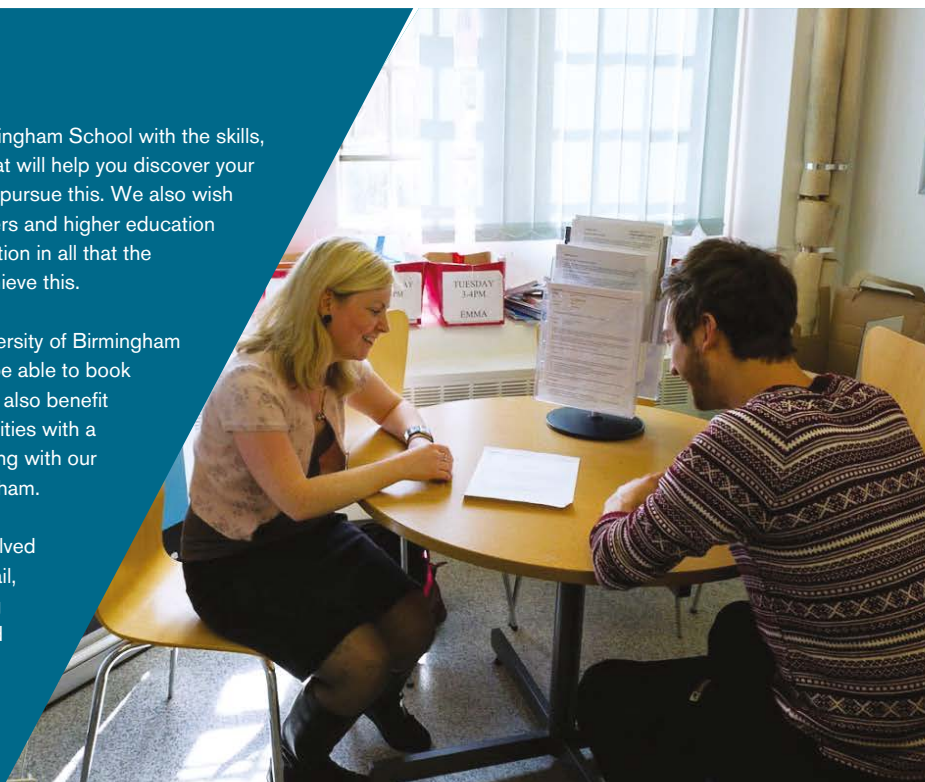
PREPARING YOU FOR THE FUTURE

CAREERS

We want students to leave the University of Birmingham School with the skills, virtues (or personal qualities) and experiences that will help you discover your passion, and give you the confidence and skill to pursue this. We also wish to prepare you with the experiences that employers and higher education institutions seek. We believe that active participation in all that the School has to offer will allow each student to achieve this.

We have bespoke careers support from the University of Birmingham Careers and Employability Service, and you will be able to book regular careers meetings to seek advice. You will also benefit from lectures, seminars and enrichment opportunities with a considerable number of external partners, including with our Corporate Partners and the University of Birmingham.

For example, students have been able to get involved with a HS2 engineering scheme with Network Rail, had a careers talk with the chair of manufacturing body EEF, worked with Flatpack Film Festival and social enterprise Beatfreem, and been mentored by professionals from KPMG.

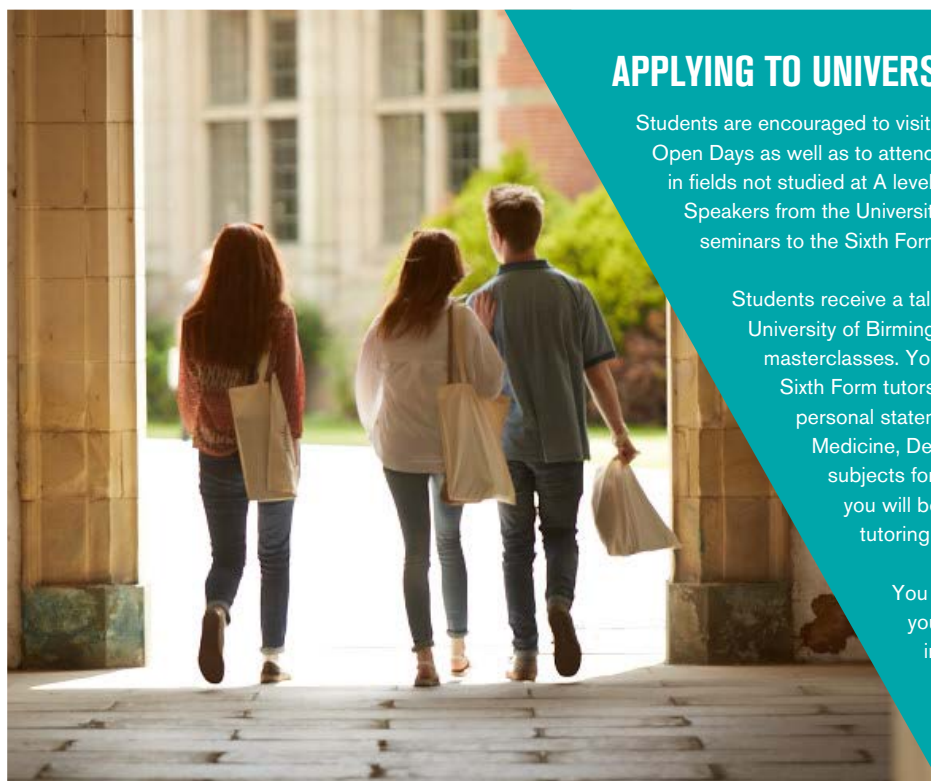


APPLYING TO UNIVERSITY

Students are encouraged to visit a wide range of university and college Open Days as well as to attend courses designed for prospective applicants in fields not studied at A level (Law, Medicine, Engineering and Psychology). Speakers from the University give presentations, guest lectures and seminars to the Sixth Form to help with this.

Students receive a talk from the Admissions Tutor at the University of Birmingham, as well as Personal Statement writing masterclasses. You will also receive ongoing support from your Sixth Form tutors and other staff to help you create a compelling personal statement. For those students applying to study Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science, as well as other subjects for which there are admissions examinations, you will be given the opportunity to have specialist tutoring during enrichment.

You will also have an opportunity to sharpen your interview skills, by undergoing mock interviews with Professor James Arthur, the Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor (Staffing) at University of Birmingham.



LYDIA KENDALL

YEAR 13

HISTORY, ART, ENGLISH LITERATURE

Why did you choose to come to UoB School?

Personally for me I wanted a new setting, to move away from my old school and it was a bit of a change from everything. It was new but it had a reputation around it already. I trusted the University so I trust the School. The building, the setting, the open spaces, how bright it is – I liked the feel of the School.

Do you remember your first term at the Sixth Form?

It's a bit of a blur now! I remember my year group became very close very quickly. It was nice to meet new people and everyone got along. I remember thinking that the classroom spaces were really nice, clean and open.

What makes this school different to other sixth forms and colleges?

It has new ideas and new ambitions. It feels bigger, in a way – the vision feels bigger. Even though there are opportunities I would have had at other Schools, with this School I trust it completely when they talk about things like UCAS. We get people in from the University of Birmingham Admissions team. And we also have other visitors, people who are really important and interesting are invited here all the time. Chris Riddell the illustrator has been my favourite person who has visited, which was really interesting for me because I do art. I don't think I would have had that opportunity if I had been to another school.

I feel like the vision they have for our futures and how they can help us, the things that they bring, I just think are amazing. And the supplies/equipment we have, especially in subjects like Art, it's beyond what you would expect.

How has the relationship with the University affect your Sixth Form experience?

I think the relationship with the University of Birmingham improves our experience so much. Going back to the start of term and Year 12, I did a work placement at Winterbourne Gardens, which I wouldn't have been able to do had I not come to this School and had we not had links with the University. I can then put that on UCAS that I've done work experience which links to the course I want to apply for. We do a lot of stuff that is tailored to our course, so it's all building up, so by the time you get to UCAS you realise you've done things you didn't know you'd done. I think the links with the University just strengthen that and give us more opportunities. It makes life more interesting! If you've got people constantly coming in and telling you about things you wouldn't usually have heard of, it really broadens what you think is possible.

What enrichment activities have you done since joining the Sixth Form?

I've done running enrichment - that was something I would not normally have done! I think the School has definitely improved my confidence a lot. I hated Sports Day in my old school but this year I love the [annual College events] Bud's Run and the Rugby Festival. I just find that it's more about taking part, having a bit of a laugh, community spirit, and not just about who is the best. I was taught to run by a Paralympian athlete, which was obviously something unique – it was a great experience.

I've done feminism enrichment which is also really good because it's something that I'm passionate about. Being able to do that also counts towards wider study for my English course so that's also helpful.

I feel that enrichment is a brilliant thing to get to do. It's something that's away from your A levels and the stress of exams, and you get to explore things that you're genuinely interested in.

Do you know what your future plans are and how do you think UoB School's Sixth Form will help with that?

I think I want to do English Literature at University, and I feel like this school has really helped me to realise what I'm really interested in. I came to this School knowing what I was good at and what I was vaguely interested in but I never had a passion for something. Coming to this school and having really amazing teachers that are genuinely interested in the subject has made me be interested in it more, so now I love English and I realise how passionate I am about it. I think that's going to help me with my future because it's going to make me want to go out, find opportunities and work harder to get them. I think the School is going to help me get the grades I need to explore my next steps.

Is there anything else you'd tell anyone who was thinking about coming to UoB School Sixth Form?

The building is amazing, I love the people, my teachers are great, the atmosphere is really nice. I don't hate waking up every day to come to school, which says a lot!





SAFFRON TAYLOR

YEAR 13

GEOGRAPHY, ART, ENGLISH LITERATURE

What makes UoB School different from other places?

There's a real community feel here, which I think is greater because we've all come from different schools. We also get so many opportunities, and from my friends who go to colleges, they say they don't have the same experiences as I do here. There's a lot of independence. There's always support if we need it but they let us get on with things and do it our own way. I think the support we get from teachers here is great, there's always someone you can go to for any kind of issue.

What have been your top experiences since being here?

In the last week of school last year we had Rio Carnival week where we were off timetable, and did lots of different activities each day that week. We did geo-caching, some of our year learnt to play samba drums, and on the last day we had the actual carnival event, everyone came together and we had a sort of party in the atrium. It was really fun!

I've helped out on every Open Evening, and even though it's strange to say that's been a highlight, it's been so nice to show new people around our school, share our experiences, and have everyone – staff, Sixth Form and Year 7s and 8s – working together as a team.

What kind of enrichment opportunities do you have?

I did Envision last year. We got to create our own social action campaign from scratch, and develop it over the course of the year, then we had to pitch it to KPMG at their offices in Birmingham City Centre, who helped us make it look really professional. Our campaign was about Homelessness. We ran a cake sale and raised £135, and then used that money to buy socks, gloves and food for homeless people. Then we went out into the City Centre for two days and gave these out. We also made 'survival guide' booklets which we gave out too. They really encouraged us to reflect on what skills we had developed over the course of the year, and also got a reference from the Envision mentors at the end which has been great for UCAS.

How have you developed as a person?

I've developed a lot as a leader because there have been a lot of opportunities to become a leader, for example in the College events in sports, and in Envision. Usually I wouldn't volunteer to be the team leader, but the amount of opportunities and the way they are presented mean that I feel more able to put myself forward and challenge myself.

How does being in this School help to prepare you for the future?

They've been prompting us from the end of Year 12 to start our UCAS applications, so by Autumn, everyone's pretty much finished their personal statements. You know you can always get a careers interview, or ask your subject teachers for guidance.

We always have lecturers come in from the University of Birmingham, so having that experience has set us up with a taste of what it's like at university and what we should expect.

I'd personally like to do Geography at university and I feel like the teachers in the Geography department have really helped me to discover my interest in the subject.

What advice would you give to a Year 11 student deciding where to go?

Think carefully about how exactly you want to be taught, whether you want to be in a big college or a smaller Sixth Form, and whether you want to have the support of things like form groups and form tutors. In a Sixth Form like ours, there's a sense of community because you know everyone and the school is set up to foster that.

AMELIA MERCER

YEAR 13

ENGLISH LITERATURE, FRENCH,
RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Why did you choose to come here?

I saw the school about 9 months before coming here for Sixth Form and I was quite intrigued by it. I came to the Open Evening and heard the Principal Mr Roden speak. I was a bit wary of going back to my old school because I knew what to expect, whereas with this School I liked the whole idea of enrichment and character education, going a little bit further than just A levels. I felt it was going to be a good school for my personal development.

Was it daunting moving away from your old school?

No, for Sixth Form it was really nice to have a fresh start. I think you need to see A levels very differently from GCSE, so I think it's good to have a change.

Did you ever think about going to a Sixth Form College?

I think for me, as I wanted to do A levels, being at a Sixth Form in a School felt like the better option. You need the structure, and you need to be pushed and stretched by your teachers and the school environment, otherwise it can be easy to end up coasting, and end up stuck.

What support do you get in the Sixth Form?

With A levels, it is a huge jump into the deep end from GCSEs, but at no point do you feel like you're drowning. You know the support is there from the teachers and you're not on your own. If you need extra support, all the staff work together to always make sure you're ok. You get as much support as you need but not too much to baby you.

What have been your top three moments so far?

We went to a Women in Finance conference at the University of Birmingham – that was definitely one of the best things. Secondly, the Rugby Festival – the Opening Ceremony of that was incredible – the atmosphere, the students and staff coming together was just fantastic. And thirdly... probably the first day, because there was such a buzz about this being a new place.

What have you done as part of enrichment and how has it helped you?

I've done loads of different things! It's given me so much – more than I expected – to put down for my personal statement, so many different experiences, and from the experiences I've matured so much.

I've done Lacrosse which was really good. At one point we got so into it we wanted to make a team and play in leagues.

We'd sit in classrooms at lunchtimes and watch the rules because we were getting so into it! I'd not really played it properly before so it was great to get a chance to try it out. Some of the year went to watch a match that the Students were competing in at the University. I'm also currently doing yoga which is so nice and relaxing on a Friday afternoon!

This year I'm volunteering at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital on a ward with elderly people, chatting to them, playing games. I love sitting on the wards and talking to people because you can just tell the elderly people appreciate the company so much, and at no point with the volunteering I've done does it feel like I 'have to' be there. It's so rewarding. I also get to see some of the business management of the hospital and what goes on behind the scenes, which is really interesting because no-one really thinks about that aspect of running a hospital.

How has being in UoB School Sixth Form affected how you think about your future or the opportunities you feel will be open to you in the future?

It's completely changed what I want to do. I've feel so much clearer about what I want to do in the future. The School brought in professionals from KPMG to talk to us, and from that I've now decided I want to do a degree in Politics and International Relations and then do a graduate scheme, which is not something I'd had the chance to think about too much before. If I hadn't been at UoB School's Sixth Form I would have been going to University for the sake of it, rather than understanding why I really wanted to go or what I wanted to get out of it.

Do you have much contact with the University of Birmingham?

Yeah I think from the very first day we spent the day at the Uni with an admissions tutor and straight away, there were so many things that were in my head about university that were cleared up. I think all the links, the amount of people we have in from the University of Birmingham, all the bits of information you start to collect, it helps to give you a clear idea of what they're expecting and what you need to do. Also all of the students, the graduates, the lecturers, the tutors who come in and talk to us are great. They say for A level you need to do wider study around the subject, and we get a lot of that from the links with the University.

Is there anything else you'd say to someone who was thinking about coming here but wasn't too sure?

I'd just say take the risk! I did, and I've loved it.





DUNCAN MILLER

YEAR 12

MATHS, PHYSICS, PRODUCT DESIGN,
GEOGRAPHY

What stood out for you about the University of Birmingham School?

The links to the University of Birmingham caught my eye because they have a strong Engineering department, which is what I want to pursue, and I felt it would be great to have that connection. The idea of getting to have lectures from professors at the University really intrigued me too, it's not something I experienced at my old school.

What were your first few weeks like?

From my old school there were 3 or 4 of us who came over, and I also knew people from my old primary school, so when I arrived, it was quite nice to come back together again. It was really nice in Year 12 when we started because everyone was new, so there were no little groups, you had to go and just talk to people. It was really nice to start in that environment, it was like a new beginning for everyone.

How did the school compare to your expectations?

The building itself was what I expected because I saw it develop as it was being built. There's been a lot more support than I expected. My worry was that there wouldn't quite be the support behind me that I had in my old school, but there really has been, even though it's been a brand new environment for everyone, you feel really supported. If you are tailing a little bit, they really help you to move forward. It's nice to know you've got that support behind you.

What opportunities have you had since joining the School?

I'm on an engineering scheme at the moment during enrichment, which is about getting you to 'Think Like an Engineer'. Our brief is to redesign Snow Hill Station, working with Network Rail mentors for 6 months. I wouldn't normally have had that option anywhere else. There was a whole process to get into it, you had to write like a job application – there were only 6 places. And if you did well at that, you had to do an interview with Dr Woehrling, Mr Brittan and someone from Network Rail, so it was quite hard to get onto it – it's been a really useful process for giving you a taste of what real life is like. It's been a new adventurous sort of thing to do for me which has been really good.

For enrichment on Fridays this year I've been doing cooking on a budget which has been a really nice contrast to my A levels. Maths, physics, geography, product design aren't easy subjects, so it's great to get to do something that is more creative, and we get food at the end of it which

is always a bonus! Again it prepares you for what life is going to be like, teaching you how to make your spag bols, chilli-con-carnes etc. It's been great working with new people, new teachers, and it's a great environment to be in.

Is the school really academic?

It's on par with what I thought it would be. I've come from a very academic school, and they pushed you hard there. Here the teachers really support you because they want you to excel in what you're good at and reach your potential, it's been great to have that.

The facilities, like the science super-labs and the Product Design workshop are really great, and support the teaching you get. I'd say because it's a brand new school, the facilities here are better than most, and you can tell there's a genuine investment to make it a great place to learn and to be.

How does the School help prepare you for your future?

In terms of applying to Uni, having Mr Dwyer, Head of Sixth Form, leading it all is great – to be able to speak to someone who's got so much experience. When everything is new to you, it's very useful to have someone who you can sit down with and ask, 'What do I need to do here?' It's also great to have a lot of the other teachers around to ask for help with UCAS, and to also have a Careers Tutor from the University who comes in every week.

The character education we do builds and helps shape people's personalities and characteristics – the best of everyone brought into each person, which has been really beneficial and really interesting, because it's never something I've really studied or thought about before. It's basically just trying to make you the best person you can be, be that helping people out, being able to empathise with people – skills you can't necessarily learn from looking in a book. How to be kind to people – everyone kind of knows that, but going into a bit more detail about what that really means is quite eye-opening and feels useful in the long term.

Throughout Year 7 to 11 you're very spoon-fed, and everything is given to you. Whereas here if you want to do something that no one's ever done, but it's something to do with community service or academia, they let you do it – anything goes really. You're treated like an adult, and it's been really enjoyable to have that freedom.

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Please note that every effort has been made to make this information as accurate as possible. However, the School reserves the right to make changes, as circumstances demand, although these will be kept to a minimum.
For up to date information, please see our website.