



Cardinal Wiseman
Catholic Sixth Form Centre
Part of the Romero Catholic Academy

Preparing for Starting Sixth Form

What's Sixth Form like?

Starting Sixth Form can be daunting and the transition can appear scary. Sixth form presents lots of new challenges (and some irritatingly familiar ones too).

To support you, we have prepared this booklet to help provide a smooth transition from Year 11 into Cardinal Wiseman Sixth Form. We hope that you find the information useful but if you have any questions do not hesitate to contact one of the Sixth Form Team.

Workload

Level 3 courses are indisputably much harder than GCSEs. Despite only studying 3 (or possibly 4) subjects, you will have more than 10 hours of homework to do each week; organisation and hard work in school really do pay off and sorting your notes and doing homework in school will guarantee you an easier life out of school. Not easy, mind, but easier. And don't forget that missing a day in school might mean missing the same number of lessons, but will almost certainly mean missing twice as much work.

The important thing, though, is not to let all of this scare you! Tens of thousands of candidates sit their A-levels every year and come out with more than they started with; most are pleased with their grades, and the ones that aren't are often (though not always) the ones that didn't work hard enough. If they can do it, so can you.

Organisation

At GCSE things were easy. But you still probably did things wrong. Never had the right stationery in lessons, or enough paper, or the right books; forgot your homework, lost handouts, didn't understand notes. Take heed of all this and get it right this time. Get the right stationery, make sure you always have spare paper (not just enough paper, spare paper!).

- Buy a planner, or even a small diary, and write down what your homework is for each day. How you do this is irrelevant, as long as it works for you.
- Have a separate ring-binder for each subject. Spend some time every week to organise your folders. Have a decent filing system (your teachers can advise you on this). Use dividers and plastic wallets.
- Go through your notes each week. Use highlighters for key facts. Start making revision notes early - don't leave it until your exams. If you occasionally find you don't understand your notes, then do ask a teacher or a friend. Don't be ashamed. These are your qualifications, not anyone else's, and staying back a year won't be any fun while all your mates are going to uni and you're resitting the lower sixth.

Study Skills

The quantity of work that will be covered during your level 3 studies is huge and you will need to remember it all for the exams; but don't panic, we have designed a series of workshops to help you learn a range of techniques to study effectively.

Independent study lessons

Make effective use of independent study time. If you don't, you will have to do the work at home. Some ideas for independent study include:

- Do your homework
- Go through your notes and prepare revision materials
- See your teachers for help if necessary
- Organise your folders

Learn as a Community

Establish a group chat or study group for your classes so you can all share resources or discuss work, it's enormously handy when someone forwards helpful websites or handouts and lets you know you're not alone in the struggle to do well. Don't treat your classmates as 'the competition', working together will be to the benefit of all.

It's not just about qualifications

Whilst exams are important, Sixth Form is not just about getting grades. You will have opportunities to learn new skills which will be vital for life after sixth form. You can do your Duke of Edinburgh award, take part in Sports Leaders or participate in university programmes such as Pathways to Law / Business. In school, you can complete a first aid course or become a mentor to younger students. You may have some ideas of your own - just ask.

By participating in these non-qualification activities you will develop employability skills which will help you to 'stand out from the crowd' when you apply to university, apprenticeships or employment after sixth form.

How can I prepare for starting my Level 3 subjects?

We have provided you with a range of activities and resources to prepare you to start your new courses in September which can be accessed in the Sixth Form area of the School website or by using the link <https://tinyurl.com/umv5ap3>. This Transition Work is an important part in both aiding your understanding of what the courses will entail and in deciding if you have chosen the most appropriate courses for the next two years.

We recommend that you not only complete Transition Work for the subjects that you have chosen but also any reserve subject choices or any other subjects they have considered studying. Use this introduction to give you a good start to your Year 12 work that will help you to enjoy, and benefit from, the course. The more effort you put in, right from the start, the better you will do.

It is important that your teachers can support your preparation. In order that this can be achieved we need to know which transition work you are completing. Please email the relevant Head of Subject to express and interest in studying their subject. Contact details are listed in the below:

Applied Arts (art and photography)

Ms McLelland (amcclelland@cwcscoventry.co.uk)

Applied Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics

Mr Hermitage (shermitage@cwcscoventry.co.uk)

Business Studies, Information Technology

Mr Marwaha (mmarwaha@cwcscoventry.co.uk)

Economics

Ms Duffy (nduffy@cwcscoventry.co.uk)

English Literature, Media Studies

Mrs Montgomery (cmontgomery@cwcscoventry.co.uk)

French, German, Italian, Polish, Spanish

Mrs Williams (gzienkiewicz@cwcscoventry.co.uk)

Health & Social Care, Sport Science

Mr Page (cpage@cwcscoventry.co.uk)

History, Geography, Travel & Tourism

Mrs Alton (kalton@cwcscoventry.co.uk)

Maths, Further Maths

Mr Wheat (rwheat@cwcscoventry.co.uk)

Philosophy & Ethics

Mr Beesley (cbeesley@cwcscoventry.co.uk)

Psychology, Sociology

Mrs Campbell (ecampbell@cwcscoventry.co.uk)

Research activities: Pathways to future study / careers.

All students should take some time to research opportunities available after 6th form; this may influence your final choice of subject and your motivation once you begin your studies in the 6th form. Probably the most comprehensive resource and easiest to navigate is the ucas website (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service - you will hear the term ucas repeatedly in the coming two years) <https://www.ucas.com/>. Here you will find links to information about universities and so much more - including apprenticeships and modern apprenticeships.

In addition it is worth spending some time now taking a look at some of the programmes that you can apply for once in the 6th form.

Sutton Trust The Sutton Trust is a national charity which not only undertakes research and advocates policy change, but also promotes practical solutions to educational inequality. The Trust works with selected academically talented students to enhance their learning opportunities and supports them in accessing university places and professions. The programme focuses on young people from non privileged backgrounds with academic talent, where a number of initiatives are aimed at ensuring students make the most informed and appropriate choices for their futures; and that these choices are not prejudiced by a lack of aspiration or misinformation. Check it out at <https://www.suttontrust.com/our-programmes/>

Warwick University [Scholars](#) Programme

Warwick University Pathways to Professions: [Banking and Finance](#) & [Law](#)

University of Birmingham - Pathways programmes

<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/teachers/pupil-opportunities/post-16/Pathways-to-Birmingham.aspx>

I understand we have a number of high achievers joining 6th form this year and look forward to supporting you in aiming for places at top universities; start your research here;

University of Oxford: [UNIQ](#)

Keble College Oxford: has set up an interesting chat facility that is targeted at state school students; https://www.keble.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduates/admissions-chat/?utm_medium=link&utm_campaign=Link%20school%20bulletin%2028.04.2020