



Parent Update – February 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

As we pass the halfway point in this academic year, we would like to share information regarding what has been going on at UTC Swindon since Christmas and to highlight some key event in the near future.

Destinations and academic progress

Students in Years 11 and 13 have met with our independent careers advisor, to map out plans and actions for their next steps at the end of Key Stage 4 and 5 respectively. Unlike most traditional schools, our main priority is to ensure positive career progression through securing appropriate destinations for students at the end of their time with us. This is underpinned by our mission:

“To transform lives through learning, by ensuring a high quality learning experience underpinned by high expectations and aspirations in order to meet the needs of employers within STEM related industries”.

With the reduced availability of apprenticeships for Post-16 students, competition is even greater and the benefits of studying at Level 3 more important, as employers are looking for more highly qualified, skilled and work ready employees. We continue to support all of our students in accessing the best possible opportunities in securing their next step in their careers.

Academic qualifications are also important for career progression and all our students will have external exams and submission of assignments over the coming months.

It is a pleasure to report that our Year 11 students have just received the results from their external unit exam for NCFE Engineering, with the best results we have ever had. As well as 100% pass rates, students excelled across the ability range – 85% achieved Level 2 Pass or higher, 58% Level 2 Merit of above and 6% Level 2 Distinction. Congratulations to students for their achievements and to staff for their hard work and dedication in supporting students' learning.

Details of external exams will be sent out after the break, but we would expect students to be working in their own time to support their retention of knowledge in preparation for the summer.

Learning Philosophy and our Core Values

The Activate Learning Education Trust learning philosophy is unique in the way that it links key aspects of how we learn. More information on this can be found [here](#).

We continue to embed our core values so we all can develop personally as well as professionally.

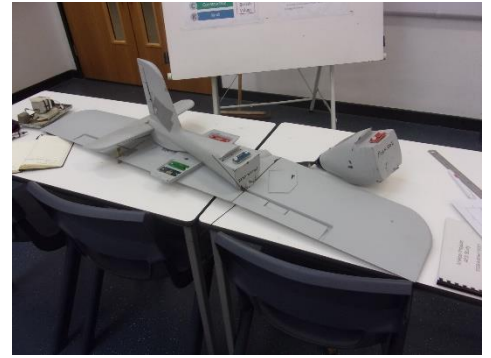


Employer Engagement

REME Craftsman's Cup – Year 13 students are well into this year's competition, which also forms part of a mandatory unit for the Level 3 BTEC Engineering Diploma. Students across several Activate Learning schools and colleges, have been set real-life challenges, from which they have to select a


project to plan, design, manufacture and evaluate a response. This really brings learning to life and prepares students for the need to apply knowledge and engineer solutions.


We are grateful for the support of the REME team in mentoring our students and for inspiring creativity and problem-solving skills. Judging on projects will take place soon and finalists will present their project to a panel at MOD Lyneham in the summer term.




Spotlight Event – this event involved a range of STEM employers running an engaging day of round robin workshops with Year 10/11 students, to develop employability skills and an insight into apprenticeships. We are extremely grateful to colleagues from Vodafone, Catalent and Desk Cowork for their time and energy in linking learning to employment.

Royal Navy Challenge – our two Year 10 teams continue to design and manufacture their vessel to complete the challenge of delivering humanitarian aid to a Caribbean island, devastated by the impact of a hurricane. This involves numerous trials (and errors!) to ensure the most robust and useable vessel to meet the challenge (see below).




ROYAL NAVY



ROYAL NAVY ENGINEERING CHALLENGE 2020

EXERCISE RIVER RESCUE

HMS Sultan, Gosport, Hampshire
Wednesday 18 March 2020

HMS Bulwark is conducting a humanitarian operation in the Caribbean, where a hurricane has devastated a remote island. Your challenge is to design and build a remotely-operated vessel to deploy from the ship, navigate the river, deliver humanitarian aid to the local population and return to safety.

Enrichment at UTC Swindon

Kit Car Club – Thursday evening sessions have continued this term and students have been enthusiastically assembling the two Tiger Sport cars, which are nearing completion. The plan is to sell these with bespoke markings and purchase new kits to start from scratch again.

Thanks again to Paul Lane for inspiring the setting up of the club and for leading some highly motivated students in this excellent activity

Work Experience

Most Year 12 students have completed placements with employers, with the remainder hopefully being set up for later in the summer term. Year 12 engineering students need a minimum of 10 days' placement to successfully complete their Level 3 BTEC. Finding placements is increasingly difficult due to recent economic uncertainty and many employers focusing on their post-Brexit plans. Therefore, if you have links/contacts or are able to secure placements for your child, please do contact Hollie Danby, Assistant Principal (hdanby@utcswindon.co.uk), so that we can update records and follow up. Year 10 students will be on their two-week placements at the start of July.

UTC Pipeline Programme

This year's programme is reaching its conclusion and students participated in Day 3 activities this week with Wiltshire Police, BMW, REME, Fujitsu, Intel and a visit to the Farnborough International Exhibition & Conference Centre. The latter was to attend the Southern Manufacturing and Electronics Show, the most comprehensive annual industrial exhibition in the UK and a major pan-European showcase for new technology in machinery, production equipment, electronic production and assembly, tooling and components as well as subcontract services across an impressively wide range of industry. Students and staff were given the opportunity to have a close look at state-of-the-art industrial practice as well as speak to potential employers. There aren't many schools that have such opportunities and we will be signing up for 2021!



Recruitment 2020

We have held two successful Open Days this term, with the next one on **Saturday 29th February (10am-1pm)** and you are very welcome to attend, whether as an existing or future UTC parent to catch up with what we are doing and plans for the future. If you know someone who has a child that may wish to consider studying at UTC Swindon, please do encourage them to have a look. You can book onto the event by clicking [here](#).

Supporting Charity

Students have arranged a fundraising day on Friday 14th February in order to raise funds in support of Dementia UK and the Alzheimer's Society. This involves cake sales, non-uniform and no doubt some impromptu events!

General Information

Uniform: Despite some adverse weather, students are generally extremely smart in their UTC business wear. If it is particularly cold, an appropriate jumper (not sweatshirt) is useful to wear underneath a suit jacket. Thank you in anticipation of your continued support in ensuring that your child is dressed as expected each day and has the necessary equipment in order to complete their studies, both in the classroom and workshop.

Car Parking: Several parents are using the courtyard area to drop-off or pick-up their child. The entrance is narrow and potentially hazardous with both UTC and public pedestrians and the bend on a busy bus route. Please can I reiterate my request to arrange to collect your child elsewhere - there is plenty of short-term parking available in the local area.

Key Dates

February

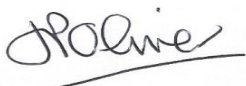
Monday 24th February (8.30am)

Start of term (all students)

Saturday 29 th February (10am-1pm)	Open Day
March	
w/c Monday 2 nd March	Year 11 Pre Public Exams (until Friday 6 th March)
Tuesday 17 th March	KS5 Pipeline Day
Wednesday 18 th March	Royal Navy Challenge Finals
April	
Friday 3 rd April (12.30pm)	End of Spring Term
Tuesday 21 st April (8.30pm)	Start of term (all students)
May	
Friday 8 th May	Bank Holiday
w/c Monday 11 th May	External Summer exams start
Monday 25 th – Friday 29 th May	Half-term break
June	
Monday 3 rd June	Start of term (all students)
Friday 12 th June	Last GCSE exam
Wednesday 17 th June	Last A Level exam
w/c Monday 29 th June	Year 10 Pre Public Exams week
Saturday 27 th June (10am-1pm)	Open Day
July	
Monday 6 th July – Friday 17 th July	Year 10 (some Year 12) Work Experience
Monday 13 th – Tuesday 14 th July	New Year 10 Taster Days
Thursday 9 th July	Year 5 STEM Day
Friday 10 th July	Staff Training Day
Wednesday 22 nd July (12.30pm)	End of Summer Term
August	
Thursday 13 th August (9am-11am)	Year 12/13 Results Day
Thursday 20 th August (9am-11am)	Year 10/11 Results Day
September	
Tuesday 2 nd September (8.30am)	Year 10 Induction Day
Wednesday 3 rd September (8.30am)	Start of term (all students)

Other dates, including holidays, are shown on our website (www.utcswindon.co.uk).

With best wishes,



Jon Oliver

Principal



"Transforming lives through learning."

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