

# Blundell's and Beyond

## - for parents and students

From: Blundell's School Careers Education and Guidance Department

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

#### Thursday 19 August

AS and A2 level results

#### Tuesday 7 September, 7pm

Year 11 Futures Meeting ,  
Blundell's School

#### Thursday 16 September, 3 to 6 pm

Royal Veterinary College on  
Tour at Blundell's School

#### Friday 1 October

Blundell's deadline for early  
UCAS applicants

#### Friday 8 October

U6 parents meeting and Aca-  
demic Forum

#### Monday 18 October

Blundell's deadline for other  
UCAS applicants

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### GRADUATE NEWS

Having surveyed 700 graduates new research by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development shows that 60% of recent graduates have had to take first jobs not related to their degree subject. In addition over a quarter said:

- their degree did not equip them with the skills they needed for the workplace
- they had decided to delay looking for a job by taking a post graduate course
- other research indicates that students are paying up to £8,000 for internships in an attempt to get a foot in the graduate labour market

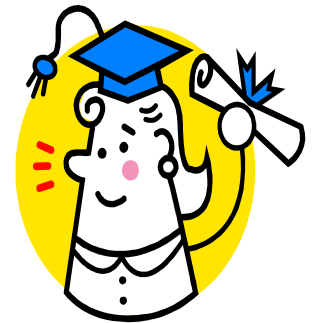
Recent research by the Confederation of British Industry's shows that 50% of employers surveyed, struggle to find staff with STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) skills. Employers also indicated which A Level subjects and/or degree they look for when recruiting school/college leavers.

Half of these employers;

- are worried about filling graduate posts in the next 3 years
- said funding for STEM subjects in higher education should be protected

**A Level choices:** most employers preferred that youngsters should 'choose subjects which improved business ability and knowledge of science and numeracy'.

**Graduates:** although many graduate employers do not ask for a particular degree subject, a third of employers prefer to hire those with a STEM related subject. Starting salaries for science and engineering graduates are amongst the highest - only graduate managers and lawyers earn more in their first job.



Job sectors that value STEM skills/degrees the most:

- banking, finance and insurance 90%
- manufacturing 90%
- energy and water 89%
- construction 88%

**TotalProfessions.com** is a new website featuring information about 270+ professional bodies. It contains guidance and advice for:

- School leavers and graduates considering a career in the professions
- Professionals considering a career change

### VOLUNTEERING

**Vinspired** (the volunteering website for 16—25 year olds) has launched the 'Summer of Give' initiative 2010. The campaign is all about getting young people to give their time in return for a free festival ticket. go to [www.vinspired.com](http://www.vinspired.com) for information about the 'Summer of Give' and other volunteering opportunities.

## NEWS FROM DURHAM

Durham uses nine published methods to recruit the most able and most motivated students who can best benefit from a Durham University education irrespective of background. These are fully transparent and published on the website and are:

1. A Level (or equivalent) grades
2. GCSE (or equivalent) grades
3. the personal statement
4. the reference
5. the development of study skills
6. motivation for the degree programme

7. independence of thought and working
8. skills derived from non-academic extra-curricular activities such as engagement in sport, the arts or voluntary and community work
9. contextual consideration of merit and potential

Durham are keen to point out that they do not make lower offers on the basis of the contextual or any other information



Check out the university websites for their admissions policies.

[www.dur.ac.uk/undergraduate/apply](http://www.dur.ac.uk/undergraduate/apply)

## SCHOLARSHIPS - WORTH CHECKING OUT

This example is just from Durham University;

### Vice-Chancellor's Scholarships for Sport, Music and the Arts

In 2010/11 Durham are offering a minimum of 25 awards worth £2,000 per year to students who can demonstrate national and/or international excellence in sport, music or the arts and who will start their studies at Durham in the academic year 2011/12. The purpose of these awards is to help the most talented

applicants to come to Durham, by providing public recognition of their excellence above and beyond their academic abilities and providing an important financial contribution to continuing these activities at national and international level.

### Scholarships for Academic Excellence

Durham state that they are deeply committed to recognizing and rewarding academic excellence and will award 5 Vice-Chancellor's Scholarships for Academic Excellence worth £2,000 per year to exceptional students applying for and accepting places on the following programmes in 2011/12:

- Medical Anthropology
- Health and Human Sciences
- Anthropology and Sociology
- Ecology, Evolution and Behaviour
- Education Studies (Psychology)

*The university also has a wide range of college and other scholarships that are available*

[www.durham.ac.uk/student.finance/scholarships](http://www.durham.ac.uk/student.finance/scholarships)



### DURHAM GRANT SCHEME

This scheme will award grants of £1,000 to students starting their studies in 2011/12 who have a household income of less than £25,000. Durham Grants are non-repayable, available over and above the statutory support available from the government and intended to help the most talented applicants to come to Durham, regardless of their financial circumstances.

[www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)  
Check out the course search facility

Using the [Course Search](#) facility on the UCAS website, applicants and their advisers can now view detailed information about the different financial packages offered by universities and colleges

## CHOOSING THE RIGHT COURSE AND UNIVERSITY

Making sure your son/daughter chooses wisely presents challenges but help them work out priorities by taking the following factors into account:

**Course**—with over 50,000 different courses and combinations available in the UK your son/daughter should be able to find an ideal match. University courses can be split into 3 categories: professional (such as medicine, engineering and law), broadly or specifically vocational (for example business management, journalism or forensic science) and academic (typical subjects studied at school—history, French, physics ..). There are also plenty of unusual courses—many of which you may never have heard of—which could be worth considering. Factors applicants should take into account include: entry requirements; methods of teaching and assessment; subject –specific facilities such as quality of labs and IT equipment; graduate career prospects and course content. The latter is crucial and will vary from university to university despite similar degree titles. Let your son/daughter be the judge and above all encourage him/her to pick something he/she will actually enjoy as they are more likely to do well. Getting a good class of degree should help give a head start in the job market.

### Location: campus or town?

City centre university where facilities are central and handy for shops, nightlife, cultural activities and so on? OR campus life where everything from the students' union to halls, library and lecture theatres

is on one site?

Using a map of the UK to point out destinations is also a useful exercise; distance and travel costs from home to university as well as the physical environment are important.

### Traditional, new or specialist college?

As a very general guide ancient universities like Oxford and Cambridge and red brick universities like London and Sheffield tend to offer more traditional academic and professional courses whilst the newer universities often offer more vocational degrees. Specialist colleges, such as art colleges and drama schools are obviously more focused and are often fairly small.

### Size: small v large?

HE institutions range from the tiny (fewer than 2,000 students) to the very large (over 30,000 students). A small university can be more manageable but might have fewer facilities and non-academic activities. A bigger university will have more going on but may be more intimidating to some students.

### Accommodation

How much is it? Is it guaranteed in the first year (and final year)? Is it good quality? Are there ensuite facilities? Perhaps most important from your point of view—is it catered or self catering? Many students from Blundell's find the Westlake facilities superior to those of many universities



halls!

### Facilities

All universities have the basics like libraries, sports halls, computer suites .. but there can be differences in the quality and range of facilities on offer.

### Clubs and societies

Does your son/daughter have a major interest in a sport or other activity that they would like to pursue at university? If so this may affect their choice. Maybe they have always wanted to try amateur dramatics or writing for a student newspaper—will this be possible?

### League tables

For many confused students and parents the newspaper (the Times and the Guardian are the most prominent) league tables hold the key to finding a 'good' university. They are useful but try to avoid looking at them cold. Tables are produced in different ways with weighting assigned to certain factors and can be based on universities as a whole or on individual subjects.

**Good Luck!**

## ALTERNATIVES TO UNIVERSITY

News reporter, sports reporter, magazine journalist, broadcast journalist and photojournalist—try:

[www.uptospeedjournalism.co.uk](http://www.uptospeedjournalism.co.uk)

London School of Business Management—a private higher education environment based in Bloomsbury

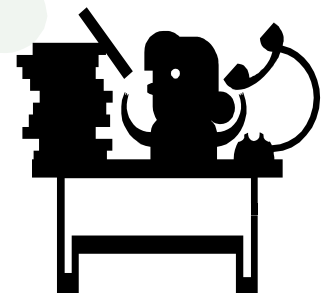
[www.lsbm.org.uk](http://www.lsbm.org.uk)

Quest Business Training—is offering scholarships for the 36 week diploma course, the 24 week personal assistant course and 24 week young executive course. Scholarship examinations are being held on Saturday 7 August

[www.questcollege.co.uk](http://www.questcollege.co.uk)



**JOURNALISM?**



These are just a few examples—there are many more.



*From: Blundell's School Careers Education and Guidance Department*

**Please remember that parents are welcome to contact me to book an appointment at any time during the week (Monday to Thursday) and to use the facilities of the Careers Centre.**

Sue Norman  
Blundell's School

01884 232396  
E-mail: [san@blundells.org](mailto:san@blundells.org)

**PARENTS - Please encourage the following action for your son/daughter over the summer holiday period:**

- Continued research into future plans – university, college, employment, gap year ....
- Complete open day visits or call in if passing nearby
- Arrange any further work experience or activities to support the application
- Register (if they have not already done so) on UCAS Apply
- Start to input information on to the UCAS form through Apply
- Complete a draft personal statement
- Update CV

**WE WOULD BE  
MOST GRATEFUL  
FOR YOUR  
SUPPORT!**

## USEFUL WEBSITES

### **[www.unistats.com](http://www.unistats.com)**

Presents the results of the 2009 National Student Survey. Satisfaction ratings in teaching, assessment, academic support and facilities. Also includes entry information and graduate employment data.

### **[www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk](http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk)**

League tables, subject tables, university and city profiles, university sports facilities and teams, graduate destination data and much more.

### **[www.whatcanidowithmydegree.nhs.uk](http://www.whatcanidowithmydegree.nhs.uk)**

A new NHS site that can be used by students of all disciplines

### **[www.ukcoursefinder.co.uk](http://www.ukcoursefinder.co.uk)**

An excellent and quick way to generate ideas for future courses. Also try:

The Stamford Test on the UCAS website  
**[www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)**

### **[www.studentstories.co.uk/about](http://www.studentstories.co.uk/about)**

An innovative and exciting web resource offering students and other young people access to honest accounts of student and university life

### **[www.opendays.com](http://www.opendays.com)**

Full listings of university open days that run throughout the year

### **[www.bps.org.uk](http://www.bps.org.uk)**

Students interested in a career using psychology should log-on to the British Psychological Society website where they will find a careers video and lots of useful online resources

### **[www.careersbox.co.uk](http://www.careersbox.co.uk)**

A free online library of careers related films.—real people doing real jobs which gives an insight into the world of work. Many career areas are covered



*Have a very enjoyable summer holiday*

### **[www.students.efinancialcareers.co.uk](http://www.students.efinancialcareers.co.uk)**

Wealth of information for those aspiring to Finance jobs

For more case study films across all sectors visit the UK's film library at

**[www.careersbox.co.uk](http://www.careersbox.co.uk)**

### **[http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate\\_courses/courses/](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate_courses/courses/)**

suggested reading and other resources for students to read widely around their subject