

Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)

Services at

Fircroft College of Adult Education

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Information, Advice and Guidance: Range and Purpose

Fircroft College provides very flexible Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) service to learners on its Short Course programme and Access to Higher Education Diploma course.

The College aims to offer you Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) that is appropriate to your studies, where you are with considering careers/educational options and your needs. We strive to ensure that you are able to make informed choices and can access reliable information to support your plans.

New Short Course Learners

You are invited to attend our monthly Open Days, during which you will be given an overview of courses and have an opportunity to discuss your study plans. We will help you to identify appropriate courses, and if necessary complete an application from.

Existing Short Course Learners

Each Short Course will include an element of IAG, how much depends the course. All Short Courses will give you information on possible 'what to do next?' in a group setting, usually towards the end of the course. Whilst others will include one-to-one tutorials to both review your course studies and plan your next steps.

IAG Tutorials

Whether you are new or an existing Short Course learner you only need to ask for a one-to-one IAG tutorial. Tutorials are confidential, by appointment and could last between 20-45 minutes. Just leave your details with your course tutor, at reception or Short Course office and a member of the IAG team will contact you. Tutorials usually take place in College but if this is not possible a phone tutorial can be arranged – the College will phone you.

Access to Higher Education Diploma Learners

The Access course includes IAG tutorials, university fair and other events to help you complete your UCAS application. Prior to securing your place on the Access course, you can also request a confidential IAG tutorial. Leave your name with the Registrar or at reception and a member of the IAG team will contact you to arrange an appointment at a convenient time.

Careers and jobs information on the Internet

You may want to use the internet to find out more about a specific career, jobs in your area or to help you think through your options. There are many internet sites offering jobs and careers information, a few are listed below. These sites are regularly updated, offer accurate and extensive information, and link to professional bodies.

Obviously to access internet based materials you will need some computing skills. If you are computer novice and do not use the internet much/before then why not use the books and prospectus in the small library (Room 3). Alternatively, book a one-to-one confidential Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) tutorial by leaving your details with your course tutor or at reception.

Careers on the Web

This is a vast collection/database of internet sites which you will find listed in Favourites on library computers as CRWWW2008. Careers are grouped into broad groups; just click on the group which best matches your interest to see a list of websites. Choose the website which looks most useful.

Back to Work

We have listed two government sponsored websites which contain a wealth of information about careers, jobs in your area, as well as offering help with CVs and application forms. You will also find activities to help you assess your skills and interests.

- <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>
- <https://www.gov.uk/browse/working/finding-job>

Specific Careers Websites

You may have already decided on your career path and just need a bit more information about qualifications and experience.

The NHS

This site provides information on the vast range of jobs/careers necessary to offer an extensive health service in hospitals and in the community. You will find information listed by career, skills match and people's personal experiences of working in the National Health Service.

- <http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/>

Teaching

This site contains general information about how to become a teacher, and has links to university and teacher training courses. If you already have a degree and want to teach, you will find the second website listed useful too.

- <http://www.tda.co.uk/>
- <http://www.gtr.ac.uk/>

Social Work

The British Association of Social Workers is a professional organisation which provides information and support to qualified workers and those thinking of entering the profession.

- <http://www.basw.co.uk/>

Volunteering

You may have thought about volunteering to: gain experience, support others and to try out a new career. Before you contact an organisation be clear about: what time you can offer, why you want to volunteer, why you want to volunteer with a particular organisation and what you want to do.

- www.bvsc.org/
- <http://www.do-it.org.uk/>
- <http://www.volunteering.org.uk/>
- www.ukvolunteering.org/

Pathfinder live and Odyssey live

These two internet sites are concerned with careers information; you will need registration codes to log-in to each site.

See library notice board for log-in details.

Pathfinder live

Pathfinder live can be found at: www.pathfinderlive.co.uk . You will need to register the first time, use the long registration code on the library notice board but once you have done this you will just need to enter your personal username and password. This site has four main sections: Jobs, Apprenticeships and HE matching; Jobs, Apprenticeships and HE information; Careers Information; My Records.

Jobs, Apprenticeships and HE matching – You will find this section particularly useful if you want to match your skills and interests to a range of careers. You will be asked several questions and it is your responses to these which will generate a list of possible careers/jobs. There is a Quick Match section which generates ideas/jobs based on answers to just three questions or you can do the Full Job Match which will take about 25-40 minutes. The full match will give you job ideas, interests, HE subjects and other suggestions.

Jobs, Apprenticeships and HE Information – this section is divided into four information areas: Job Information – job profiles; HE Course Information – course profiles; HE Institution Information – background information and Apprenticeship Information – what is available and where.

Careers Information – you will have access to a vast range of information on Education, training and employment issues, e.g. money, further education, learning difficulties and disabilities, etc.

My Records – records your job matches will be saved in this section. You can also complete an Action Plan to record your aim and goals necessary for its successful completion.

If you complete a matching activity bring it with you when you have your one-to-one Information, Advice and guidance tutorial.

Odyssey live

Odyssey live can be found at www.odysseylive.co.uk Once on the home page you will have to enter a long code to be able to register and gain access to the site.

See library notice boards for the registration code.

This site has four sections: Jobs Ideas, Job Search, Useful Links and General Info. Each section is further subdivided with information and links to a vast range of information.

Using Odyssey live

Once you have registered your details you only need to remember your username and password.

Jobs Ideas – this section asks you several questions and based on your answers will give you a list of suitable jobs. Each job suggestion is linked to further information, e.g. qualification requirements, pay, similar jobs, etc.

Job Search – if you have a specific job in mind and want to find out necessary skills, qualifications and professional bodies then use Job Search. Jobs are listed either alphabetically, by job family or you can search by key word.

Useful Links – this section is split into two sections, Job Finder – it has links to job vacancy websites – and Favourites – it has links to Next Steps which specialise in adult careers information and Connexions Direct which specialise in career information for young people.

General Info – this is divided into five sections containing useful information and links to a vast range of resources: Where to get help; Secondary, further and adult education; Money; Jobs, training and apprenticeships; and Employment law.

West Midlands Further Education Colleges

There are many Further Education (FE) colleges around the country; this section focuses on those in the West Midlands. The careers section in the small library (Room 3) contains prospectuses for several colleges in the wider Midlands area.

General FE colleges offer an extensive range of courses, full and part-time for young adults and mature learners. Many courses will charge fees, how much you will pay may be dependent on your income, benefits you receive and course length.

Further Education Colleges in Birmingham

- **School of Acting** - Part of Birmingham City University, offering short courses, foundation programmes, degree and post graduate courses. Further information can be found: 0121 331 7220 <http://www.bcu.ac.uk/pme/school-of-acting>
- **Birmingham Metropolitan College** – formed after the merger of Matthew Boulton, Sutton Coldfield and other colleges. Some courses are offered on several sites. 0845 155 0101 <http://www.bmetc.ac.uk/>
- **Bournville College** - 0121 477 1300 www.bournville.ac.uk/
- **Joseph Chamberlain College** – This 6th form college also offers courses for adults on its main site but also in local schools and community centres. 0121 446 2200 <http://www.jcc.ac.uk/adult-community>.
- **Queen Alexander College** – specialises in courses for learners with visual impairment and/or other disabilities 0121 428 5050 <http://www.qac.ac.uk/index.html>
- **South and City College** – Formed after the merger of South Birmingham College and City College. 0800 111 6311 <http://www.sccb.ac.uk/>

Further Education Colleges in the West Midlands

- Dudley College – 01384 363 000 <http://www.dudleycol.ac.uk/>
- Halesowen College – 0121 602 7777 www.halesowen.ac.uk/
- North East Worcester (NEW) College – 01527 570020
www.ne-worcs.ac.uk/
- Sandwell College – 0121 667 5000 www.sandwell.ac.uk/
- South Staffordshire College – includes campuses in Lichfield, Tamworth, Cannock and Rodbaston 0300 456 24 24 <http://www.southstaffs.ac.uk/>
- Stourbridge College – 01384 344344 www.stourbridge.ac.uk/
- Walsall College of Art and Technology - 01922 657000
<http://www.walsallcollege.ac.uk/>
- Warwickshire College - includes campuses in Leamington, Rugby, Moreton Morrell, Pershore College, Henley-in-Arden and Trident Centre Warwick.
Course enquiry telephone number is 0300 45 600 47
www.warwickshire.ac.uk
- Wolverhampton College - 01902 836000 www.wolvcoll.ac.uk/

Higher Education Studies

Learners on Fircroft College's Access to Higher Education Diploma course – your course includes guidance and support with university application process. Course tutors will also provide necessary UACS references too. For further information see:

- IAG tutor – Ifemu Omari
- Personal Tutor
- 'Preparing for higher things: A guide for Long Course students' booklet
- Learner Guide

Short Course Learners – if you are thinking of going to university and want to find out more about the application process then start with UCAS website listed. Prospects website has useful information on graduate level careers and post graduate studies. If you have a career in mind but not sure about the qualifications or suitable higher education courses then have a look at the HE Route Planner website.

- <http://www.ucas.co.uk>
- <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/>
- <http://www.herouteplanner.co.uk/>

Fircroft's University Fair – All learners are welcome to come to Fircroft's University fair held in November. Universities from around the Midlands attend giving you an opportunity to find out about courses, entry requirements and more. If you wish to attend please leave your details, for Ifemu Omari, at reception or ring the main college number, 0121, 472 0116.

Student Finances

It is important that you have accurate and reliable information on loans and grants to fund your university studies. England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales have separate websites where you can find out information and online application forms for student loans and grants. These sites also include loan

calculators so you can see what you may be eligible for and how much you will have to repay once in work. Remember you only repay loans not grants.

- <http://www.studentfinanceengland.co.uk/>
- <http://www.saas.gov.uk/>
- <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/student-finance>
- <http://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/>

- <https://www.gov.uk/student-finance-calculator> - this calculator tool will give you an idea of loans, grants and other monies you may be eligible to apply for to fund your university studies.

- <http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/students/student-loans-tuition-fees-changes> - this site has useful guides depending on whether you are studying part or full-time or a mature student.