

Shimna Integrated College

Careers Provision

The Shimna Careers Department is dedicated to providing meaningful, tailored and high-quality Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) for our students throughout their time with us. The Shimna careers journey prepares all students to make ambitious and realistic goals for themselves, as well as equip them with information about the labour market, encounters with employers and experiences of workplaces and further and higher education.

CEIAG provision in Shimna begins in year 8, when Employability is one of the topics included in our pastoral programme, delivered by form teachers to our students. Year 8s have their first taste of careers during our whole-school focus during our annual Careers Week, where all departments organise exciting and innovative learning opportunities which range from being wowed by visiting scientists, to hearing about living life as a touring musician, and the importance of following your dreams from an OldScholar and successful entrepreneur. From year 8, groups of students also take part in Queen's University Junior Academy and Sports Academy.

In year 9, all of our students attend timetabled careers lessons, taught by our careers coordinator, Ria Maguire. The weekly sessions focus on encouraging students to develop as autonomous and reflective learners, focusing on the skills and qualities that help to make them unique individuals and contributors to society. Through making connections between school subjects and exploring a range of pathways to successes, our year 9 students are given the tools they need to investigate all the possible futures they can plan for. They are encouraged at this stage of their education to keep their career options open, and are given support and set learning tasks which encourage them to think creatively, share ideas confidently and co-operate effectively.

In year 10, students undertake a module of dedicated careers work within their ICT course, focused on researching to discover the full range of careers options available, and the kinds of qualifications and experience to build up in order to keep all their options open. They investigate a wide range of job sectors, and assemble a portfolio of information which they have independently researched, evaluated and reviewed. This scheme of learning features as a timely and important springboard which our students can build upon to make informed decisions during transitions throughout their educational and professional development. Students receive their GCSE subject choice booklet and have an individual careers interview with our careers coordinator before they finalise their subject choices.

In year 11, the pastoral programme includes a module of careers focused work to help students continue their research and keep widening the scope of their interests. Year 11 attend our in-house Careers Fair, where they meet and chat with local employers from a wide range of sectors.

In year 12, students receive their subject choice booklet, and every student has an individual interview both with our DEL careers officer, Mary Knight and with our 6th form careers advisor, Alicia Rooney. Students are also advised of open days at local further education colleges and training providers. Students are then supported in making applications to 6th

form and/or to further education and training. Year 12 also attend our Shimna Careers Fair, and are encouraged to ask questions, seek advice and gain valuable knowledge from entrepreneurs, universities, further education colleges and a wide range of employers and training organisations. Work experience also features in year 12, with every student being given the opportunity to organise and attend a workplace of their choosing. We are very grateful to the local community for supporting and encouraging our students in these practical ways, as this experience serves to continually inspire and motivate our students in this academic setting.

6th form careers work begins with open days at Queen's University and Ulster University. In year 13, students are supported in applying for a wide range of careers experience, for example the Attorney General's Living Law Programme, the Mock Bar Trial Competition, the Mock Council of the European Union, British Medical Association open days, work experience, Nuffield Research internships, Queen's University Pathways programme, Queen's University Senior Academy, Sutton Trust University Summer Schools etc. In year 14, students are fully supported in making their UCAS applications to university, to higher level apprenticeships, to further education etc.

Payback comes when so many of our wonderful OldScholars offer their time to visit current students and share insights from the career they have chosen, during an informal drop-in or a more formal visit, where they present their own realities and answer burning questions about life after Shimna. We are extremely proud of the multitude of successes that our students continue to realise, year after year. The variety of paths and diversity of roles that our students embark upon leaving Shimna Integrated College serves to prove the importance of integration in our careers provision, and we are always so pleased to see OldScholars thriving in careers they prepared so diligently for, within our school.

