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PRESTON
COLLEGE

PARENT GUIDE

WWW.PRESTON.AC.UK



PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

At Preston College we take great pride in supporting all our learners to achieve the qualifications and outcomes they need, alongside the technical skills, knowledge and experience that employers and universities are looking for.

There is still a perception that A-Levels are the only route into Higher Education. Our range of Level 3 Extended Diplomas and T-Levels are equivalent to three A-Levels and both are accepted as an appropriate route into Higher Education, with a significant number of College learners successfully securing a place at University.

Recent research has highlighted that 85% of jobs in 2030 do not yet exist and that one third of all jobs are at high risk of automation. Preston College has a wide sector-based technical and professional offer at all levels, with the additional focus on preparing resilient and adaptable learners who will be able to cope with the ever changing world of work. Our relationships with employers and businesses ensure that our provision and work experience is relevant and of high quality.

Our sector specialist staff and industry standard facilities make the College an exciting and enjoyable place to be, all delivered in a supportive and caring environment.

We look forward to welcoming you and your child to Preston College.

Simon Nixon
Interim Principal & Chief Executive

> GCSE ENGLISH & MATHS

Achieving a good standard of English and maths is important for young people and literacy and numeracy skills are highly desired by employers. Many use maths and English qualifications as a filter in their recruitment processes with a GCSE achieved at grade 4 being the standard aspired to.

It is a requirement that any student who has not achieved a grade 4 in GCSE English or maths continue working toward this standard while at Preston College. Depending on a student's prior grade, they may be enrolled onto the stepping stone Functional Skills courses in English and maths at a level appropriate for them. Students will take these additional classes alongside their chosen vocational course with programmes timetabled to support their progress.

It is critical that your child takes their English and maths seriously and attend all classes in both subjects. It is important you encourage and support your child on their journey to achieving their GCSE English and maths at Preston College. Those students that do not show total commitment to their maths and English studies may struggle to progress to a higher level course at the end of the academic year.

> INFORMATION, ADVICE & GUIDANCE (Including Careers Advice)

At Preston College we have qualified careers advisers who offer free, confidential and impartial advice to all full-time students. Students will also receive career tutorial sessions (including university and employer visits) as part of their study programme as well as opportunities to discover the progression opportunities that are available to them through the College.



QUALIFIED CAREERS ADVISERS WHO OFFER FREE, CONFIDENTIAL AND IMPARTIAL ADVICE

> LIFE AT PRESTON COLLEGE

Your child's studies are the reason why they are here, but life at college doesn't stop at the classroom. Outside of lessons we have lots of activities that can make their time with us even more enriching. They can find out more about all of these added extras by talking to their Student Manager.

> PRESTON COLLEGE BURSARY

The College has access to a number of Bursary funds aimed at supporting learners with specific financial difficulties which may prevent them from taking part in learning. Eligibility for the funds will be based on household income, but could entitle your child to free bus travel and lunchtime meal vouchers. To find out more or apply, please go to www.preston.ac.uk/support/financial-support

> LEARNER VOICE

We value the opinions of all of our learners and welcome feedback on our courses, teaching and facilities. Students can become Learner Voice Representatives, members of the Student Council or even apply for the prestigious position of Student Governor.



> ENRICHMENT

Preston College offers a range of enrichment experiences to enhance your learning and bring it to life.

Depending on your course, opportunities can include:

- > Guest speakers
- > Employer set projects
- > Skills workshops
- > External company demonstrations
- > International trips
- > Industry visits
- > Additional qualifications (e.g. Duke of Edinburgh, First Aid)
- > College and external competitions
- > College sports and lunchtime clubs



> STUDENT MANAGER

As a full-time student at Preston College, your child will be assigned a Student Manager. They are responsible for providing pastoral support, monitoring student progress and assisting them in their development and progression. The Student Manager will provide the link between other support systems within the College and will have an enormous impact upon your child's college experience and their personal and professional development.

> PROGRESS REVIEWS

With their Student Manager and peers, your child will participate in group tutorials that give them opportunities (through themed topics) to develop their personal, social, learning and employability skills. This is in addition to the 1:1 meetings to review their progress and offer individual advice and direction to help your child overcome any barriers to learning and get the best from their course.

> WORK EXPERIENCE

As a student at Preston College, your child will undertake meaningful work experience, directly related to their vocational specialism wherever possible, giving them valuable experience of the work environment, developing their employability skills and enabling them to apply the learning from their course to real life situations.

> LEARNING SUPPORT (SEND)

The College adopts an inclusive approach to learning, offering high quality teaching which is tailored to individual requirements and aims to promote independence and the achievement of positive outcomes. The College assists learners with learning difficulties, disabilities and or medical conditions. Support may include: Exam Access Arrangements, Assistive Technology, Learning Support Coaches or Assistants and Communication Support Workers (using British Sign Language).

We also offer advice and guidance for learners with support needs who are making the move into further education and apprenticeships. Our transition team meet with prospective learners to discuss and assess support needs before enrolment.

> WELFARE & COUNSELLING

We have professional counsellors who work in the College offering confidential advice and counselling for students. Our experienced Student Welfare Advisers are also available to help support your child with any personal issues.

welfare@preston.ac.uk

counselling@preston.ac.uk



> SAFEGUARDING OUR LEARNERS

Promoting the welfare of our learners and providing a safe environment in which your child can achieve their potential is extremely important to us. Our College Safeguarding Team deals with any safeguarding issues and when required may work with external agencies to promote the welfare of anyone in need of additional support. Learners can talk to their Student Manager, the Campus Cohesion Officer or a member of the Safeguarding team.

safeguarding@preston.ac.uk

> TRANSITIONING FROM SCHOOL TO COLLEGE

College is a more adult environment which requires a more mature and independent approach. We have high expectations of our students:

- > We expect students to attend all their lessons.
- > We expect students to fully engage with work experience opportunities to support their development.
- > We expect students to aim to be the very best they can be, and that their learning behaviours support this.
- > We expect students to fully capitalise upon their time at college, to make use of available resources and develop the skills and qualities that they will require for progression and employment.
- > We expect students to fully engage with college life, ensuring they enjoy what they are doing.
- > We expect students to own and reflect on their academic progress, seeking advice and support where necessary.
- > We expect students to keep us informed of any circumstances that might affect their ability to attend class or to learn.

> PARENT FEEDBACK

We value the feedback of all parents and there will be opportunities throughout the year to have your say through regular surveys (sent by text or email) or via our Careers - Parent Feedback webpage.



FAQ

> WHO SHOULD I CONTACT IN THE FIRST INSTANCE IF I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT MY CHILD?

If you would like to discuss a matter pertaining to your child or review their progress, in the first instance you should contact your child's Student Manager. If you have a more specific enquiry, please see our list of important contacts.

> HOW DO I MONITOR MY CHILD'S PROGRESS?

As a parent you will have access to the parent portal. This will allow you to see your child's termly progress reports and their current rate of attendance, in addition to any comments that have been made by their Student Manager or subject tutors.

> WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BTECS, T-LEVELS AND A-LEVELS?

BTECs are also known as technical or vocational qualifications. There are different levels available which can include certificates, diplomas, extended certificates or extended diplomas. Level 3 Extended Diplomas are equivalent to three A-Levels and can be used to access university or employment opportunities.

T-Levels combine technical learning with work experience with 80% of the course spent in college and 20% spent completing an industry placement of at least 315 hours. T-Levels are also equivalent to three A-Levels and can be used to progress to university. The industry placement strengthens the students work skills and can be helpful in securing employment.

A-Levels are usually academic Level 3 qualifications which are studied over two years and assessed by examination. Students typically study more than one in order to gain entry into university degree programmes. At Preston College you can add an A-Level to a BTEC programme to boost your UCAS points.

> WHAT CAN I DO TO SUPPORT MY CHILD AND HELP THEM TO SUCCEED?

Some young people need more help than others to settle into College life. Here are a few hints that may help you to help them.

- > Encourage them to attend and to attend on time (especially English and maths). There is a direct link between attendance and achievement and so good attendance is crucial to your child's success.
- > Help your child with their time management. The change to a less regimented schedule is sometimes hard to handle. You could ask if they are keeping their notes up to date and getting their assignments in on time.
- > Give them space to study. The College has a Learning Zone where students can use computers and access a range of books, but if possible a quiet place at home is a real benefit.
- > We host a Parent's Evening during the spring term and it is an excellent opportunity to meet with your child's subject tutors and get an update on their progress. We would encourage all parents to attend where possible.
- > Sometimes part-time work interferes with College studies, so encourage your child to find the right balance.
- > Encourage them to ask for help. We have a range of support services, but we understand how difficult it can be for some students to ask for help.
- > If your child feels they are on the wrong course, encourage them to speak to their Student Manager as soon as possible to discuss alternatives.
- > Take an active interest in your child's course and encourage to achieve and fulfil their potential.
- > Contact your child's Student Manager as soon as possible if you have any concerns that are, or will, impact upon their learning.

> IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Student Services

studentservices@preston.ac.uk
(01772 225656)

Careers Zone

careers@preston.ac.uk
(01772 225482)
OR guidance@preston.ac.uk

Apprenticeships

appsinfo@preston.ac.uk
(01772 225522)

Safeguarding

safeguarding@preston.ac.uk

Welfare

welfare@preston.ac.uk

Counselling

counselling@preston.ac.uk