

# Guide for Students 2024-25



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## Welcome to Worcester Sixth Form College

We are delighted to welcome you to Worcester Sixth Form College and hope you enjoy your time with us. Please take advantage of all of the great opportunities available to you such as enrichment and extension activities to complement your academic studies.

This short guide is intended to help you to settle easily into your new College environment and to make a success of your time with us.

## The College Year 2024-25

Autumn Term begins	Tuesday, 27th August 2024
Half Term	Monday, 28th October - Friday, 1st November 2024
Autumn Term ends	Friday, 20th December 2024
Spring Term begins	Monday, 6th January 2025
Half Term	Monday, 17th - Friday, 21st February 2025
Spring Term ends	Friday, 11th April 2025
Summer Term begins	Monday, 28th April 2025
Half Term	Monday, 26th - Friday, 30th May 2025
Summer Term ends	Tuesday, 15th July 2025

May Day holiday is Monday, 5th May 2025

### HOW THE COLLEGE CAN SUPPORT YOU

#### IF YOU NEED GENERAL ADVICE

Your tutor is the person best able to offer you advice and guidance but subject staff may also be able to help. If you are unsure who you need to speak to, ask any member of staff and we will direct you.

#### IF YOU NEED ADDITIONAL SUPPORT WITH YOUR SUBJECTS

The College is committed to providing additional support to ensure that you are successful in your studies. Teachers will have time allocated to them to be able to provide subject support whether this is as part of a timetabled workshop, small group work or on an individual basis. Please speak to your teacher if there is work that you do not understand or need more support with. If you do not feel confident talking to your teacher about this, please speak to your tutor who will help you.

#### IF YOU WANT TO TAKE PART IN ENRICHMENT

We encourage all students to add at least one enrichment option to their programme of study. If you change your mind about your enrichment choice or there are other things you want to try, please speak to your tutor in the first instance.

#### IF YOU HAVE A LEARNING DIFFICULTY OR OTHER SPECIAL NEED

The College aims to provide you with the special support you may require if you have a specific learning difficulty, disability or chronic illness. The College can provide you with specialist support in your studies including help with improving your skills in reading, writing, spelling or numeracy. We can also call upon the support of local services (hearing, visual, psychological). Your tutor will be able to point you in the right direction if you need to access any of these services.



### HOW STUDENT SERVICES CAN HELP

Students may benefit from a range of support services which are available throughout the week and at College events in Student Services. Student Services has a very well stocked resource centre with up to date information on careers, higher education, gap years, volunteering and employment opportunities including apprenticeships and work experience.

Information on the options available to you when you leave College is provided by careers specialists and through the tutorial programme. In addition, career specific Professional Programmes (enrichment options) will give you relevant background information to help with your employment, higher education choices and applications. You may book individual interviews with specialist careers staff at any time throughout the year. There is also a drop-in enquiry service available every day during the term to help you with quick queries or to provide information.

### IF YOU NEED COUNSELLING

If you have personal problems and you think counselling might help, you can approach your tutor, Head of Year, the Safeguarding Officer or any other member of staff. You can also book an appointment with the College Counsellor directly through Student Services. The service places great importance on confidentiality. We also have a Mental Health and Wellbeing Mentor who can provide advice and support and volunteer support from Onside Advocacy and WEST. We also have a Student Assistance Programme.

### IF YOU NEED TO BUY FOOD AT COLLEGE

Our friendly Cafeteria staff provide a range of hot and cold food and drink between 8.30am and 2.30pm each day. If you have a specific dietary request, please speak to the Cafeteria team who will be happy to help. You can purchase food by contactless card payment or by having funds added to your student ID card via ParentPay.

### FINANCIAL HELP

Depending upon household income, personal circumstances, and travel arrangements, students at Worcester Sixth Form College can apply to the College's Financial Support Scheme. Financial support includes a travel allowance and free meals. Full details are available on our website or you can speak to the Student Travel & Finance Officer who is based in Student Services.

### FAITH SUPPORT

A room is available for private individual prayer. A prayer mat is available for those who wish to use it on request. We are keen to celebrate different religious beliefs and to promote greater understanding of them within College. The College has two Chaplains who meet with students each week.

## ATTENDANCE AND PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

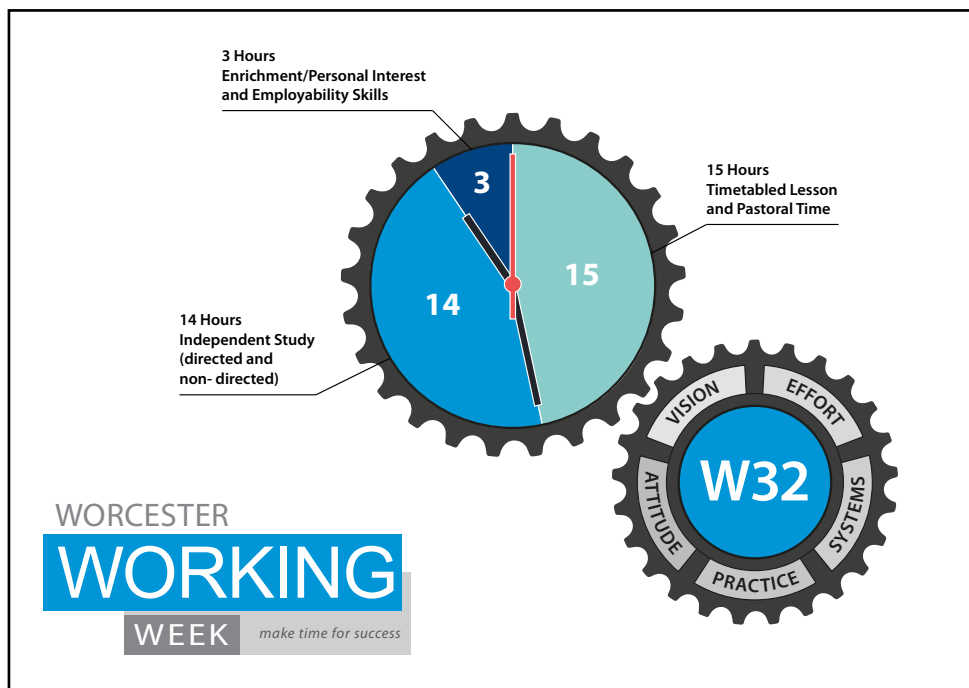
### GOOD ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY MATTER

There is a strong link between attendance and success - you must attend all timetabled lessons and activities. Make sure you arrive punctually at tutorials, lessons and all other College activities. National data indicates a clear correlation between attendance and achievement, for example, students with attendance as low as 80% will achieve two grades lower overall compared to students who attend 100% of the time. We will challenge any student where their attendance falls below 95% and where attendance does not meet our expectations and there is no improvement, a student's place at College will be at risk.

### CHANGING YOUR TIMETABLE

At Course Confirmation you will have been advised about and agreed to a programme of study to suit your qualifications, academic potential and career aspirations.

If you want to change subjects you must speak with your tutor before agreeing this with your Head of Year. If you are unsure who to speak to, please ask at reception or the Tutorial Hub. Changes to your timetable after the first week of teaching are possible but should be thought through carefully as they will require you to catch up on missed work. Please note that the



further into your courses you are the more difficult it is to then make changes to your timetable. Changes beyond the first six weeks will not be agreed unless by exception.

### HOW MUCH TIME SHOULD YOU DEVOTE TO YOUR STUDIES?

We want you to be successful in your studies. It is important that you spend as much time on your academic studies outside of lessons as you do actually in them. To encourage you to adopt good study habits we ask you to follow the principles of the Worcester Working Week which identifies 32 hours of timetabled lessons, independent study and time for enrichment and personal interests which will help you develop the key attributes of a successful learner.

Homework will be set every lesson although the nature of these tasks and the time needed to complete this work will vary. Homework will sometimes require you to complete tasks that will not be formally marked by staff. Teachers place an emphasis on 'flipped learning' which means that you may be asked to complete a task or research activity prior to the lesson. This enables teachers to explore topics in lessons in greater depth. If you choose not to complete this work you may find that you cannot contribute to lessons and maximise your learning as effectively as those who have completed the tasks. Even if work has not been set by the teacher, you will be expected to make sure your notes are well organised, detailed and without gaps.

You should adopt an attitude of continuous improvement and look back over work completed. As exams approach (external or mock exams) you should attempt practice papers (these are readily available online). Some of this work will be done in lessons but you have a responsibility to go beyond this to ensure you reach your full academic potential. You can form good study habits and routines by going to study rooms when not in lessons and there are a number of spaces that you can use including the Learning Resources Centre.

You need to take responsibility for your own learning and ensure that part-time jobs and voluntary commitments do not prevent you from succeeding. As you are in full-time education during your time at College, you must not engage in paid or voluntary employment during the College day, without the consent of your tutor or Head of Year. We do, of course, recognise that some of you, including young carers, have significant and serious additional commitments. If you inform us about these we will do our best to help you balance these competing claims on your time and direct you to any other support that is available.

### HOW WILL YOUR PROGRESS BE ASSESSED?

If you are on an Applied or T Level programme you will receive regular feedback about your progress following the submission of each of your assignments. You will learn how to demonstrate that you have achieved the learning objectives and how to improve in order to achieve higher grades.

If you are studying an A Level or GCSE programme you will also receive regular feedback on your work and you will have formal assessment periods throughout the academic year. Your teachers want you to succeed and they are always willing to discuss ways in which you can improve the standard of your work. Please take advantage of any additional support that is offered to you.

In addition, you will be more formally assessed on six occasions during your time at College. Teachers will suggest and record targets for improvement and it will be made clear to you whether you are on track to meet your Target Grade. This information will also be made available for your parents to see on the College Portal.

### COMMUNICATION

#### GENERAL

There are many occasions when tutors, teachers and others will want to get in touch with you, and there will be numerous occasions when we need to pass on general messages concerning a wide range of College related matters. It is your responsibility to ensure we have up to date and correct contact details for you and you should **regularly check your College emails**.

Some of the most important means of communication are:

- emails to your College email account and messages via the Student Portal or Teams
- text messages
- TV screens around College
- tutorials which take place each week
- notice boards in tutorial rooms

If you want to contact members of staff outside of lessons then email is usually the best means of doing so. Email addresses are available through the Portal or reception will be happy to provide these if you are unsure.

We will regularly send emails that we think will be of interest to you including promoting forthcoming events and sharing the half-termly newsletter.

#### IF YOU ARE UNWELL WHILST YOU ARE AT COLLEGE

If you feel ill whilst at College, please report to the Tutorial Hub where staff will take the appropriate action and will inform your parents as necessary. If you are too unwell to travel





home alone or on public transport, we will contact your parents and ask that they pick you up from College. The College has qualified first aid staff who will assist if required and can provide access to the medical room if needed as you wait for collection.

#### IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND COLLEGE

You are expected to be present at all lessons unless your absence is unavoidable due to illness. You should arrange personal appointments and activities, such as dental check-ups and driving lessons, outside College time.

All absences need to be reported by your parent/carer. Your parents can log on using their own email address, your student ID number and the password which will have been sent to them if you have given permission for this to happen. You will be shown the key features of the Portal and how to use it.

Reporting absence in this way means that staff are informed and the registers are updated. By using the Parent Portal, parents will also be able to view live attendance data, see exam timetables and exam results. Parents should notify every day of absence on the Portal.

#### IF YOU WANT TO GO ON A FAMILY HOLIDAY

Holidays should not be taken during term time. If a trip with your parents during College time is unavoidable, you must first seek the permission of your tutor or Head of Year. You will be asked to discuss your request with each of your subject teachers. Permission may be given once a year for holidays with your parents or other good reason. Holidays with friends or extended family during term time will not be permitted and would be dealt with as a disciplinary matter as would taking holiday without prior permission.

#### ABSENCE FOR RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS

The College will authorise one day's absence for a religious festival during term time. Your parents will need to notify the College in advance so that teachers can set work. If your absence extends beyond a day, it will be treated as a planned absence request and, as such, you will need to seek permission from your Tutor or Head of Year in advance.



### YOUR SAFETY AND WELLBEING WHILST AT COLLEGE

#### YOUR HEALTH & SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are following College rules to ensure your own safety and that of others. You should not misuse, neglect, damage or interfere with equipment for health and safety reasons. Please follow any safety instructions from subject staff or technicians about the safe use of equipment and report any hazards to tutors or subject teachers. Please support and co-operate with us to enable us to ensure your safety.

#### IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE

In this unlikely event a siren will sound. Everyone should leave the building as quickly, quietly and sensibly as possible using the nearest staircase and exit/assemble on the staff/student car park. The lift will be out of use. There will be a planned drill once every term.

#### IN THE EVENT OF A LOCAL MAJOR INCIDENT

In certain circumstances rather than evacuating the building it might be necessary for students and staff to be instructed to remain in the building. Possible examples include an emission or spillage of a noxious substance or where an incident has taken place in the vicinity of College. In this unlikely event, there will be an intermittent ringing of the College bell and you should follow instructions from staff.

#### VALUABLES

The College is an open access site and you are advised to keep money and other valuables with you at all times. The College cannot be responsible for items left in classrooms or changing rooms. We do have a number of lockers available which you can use.

#### SAFEGUARDING

If you are concerned about your safety or that of any student, in or out of College, please talk to your tutor or any teacher who will assist you by listening to your concerns. You may decide to speak to one of the Safeguarding Team:

- Heather Anderson-Stevens, Safeguarding Officer (email: heather.anderson-stevens@wsfc.ac.uk)
- Graham Williams, DSL and Senior Leader for Safeguarding & Pastoral Support (email: graham.williams@wsfc.ac.uk)
- Sara Payne, Learning Support Manager and Head of Year (email: sara.payne@wsfc.ac.uk)
- Ellie Clayton, Head of Year (email: eleanor.clayton@wsfc.ac.uk)
- Michelle Collings, Head of Year (email: michelle.collings@wsfc.ac.uk)
- Jemma Finimore, Head of Year (email: jemma.finnimore@wsfc.ac.uk)

The College Counsellor is also part of the Safeguarding Team.

# Need Help?

Concerned about yourself or someone you know,  
or worried about issues relating to Prevent?

**Your Tutor (G43)**  
is your main point of support in College and will assist you and discuss what you might do next

The College Counsellor provides students with a confidential support service. You can book an appointment in Student Services (1.5)

**Mental Health & Wellbeing Support**  
Student Assistance Programme & support from Onside Advocacy and WEST

**Learning Support**  
The Learning Support Manager can talk through any academic or learning support you feel you need. See Sara Payne (1.1 in the Learning Resources Centre)

**WHO TO TURN TO**

**Peer Mentors**  
are other students who have volunteered to offer you support on a one to one basis when needed.

**Safeguarding**  
For Safeguarding issues contact the Safeguarding Officer, the Senior Leader for Safeguarding & Pastoral Support, your Head of Year or the College Counsellor. All of these staff are part of the Safeguarding Team.

**Your Head of Year**  
If you are not able to contact your tutor or if you feel the issue is particularly urgent or serious you may choose to see one of the Heads of Year - Ellie Clayton, Michelle Collings, Jemma Finnimore or Sara Payne.

↓ Still not sure who to see? ↓

**Any Member of Staff**  
can talk through your concerns and will recommend who else could help you

**Ask a member of staff in**  
Tutorial Hub (G43), Student Services Reception (1.5) or Visitors' Reception

↓ or help yourself? ↓

You could go to STUDENT SERVICES (1.5) or the TUTORIAL HUB (G43) where there are plenty of leaflets for you to pick up on the help available in College. Here you would also find leaflets with contact details for external agencies. We would particularly recommend the WORCESTERSHIRE LITTLE DIRECTORY.

On the College Portal under STUDENT SERVICES there is a HELP FILE which lists similar details, addresses, phone numbers of associations, charities and other agencies who may be able to help you as well as links to websites you might find helpful. If in doubt... PLEASE ASK.

### OUR EXPECTATIONS

#### STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The ethos of the College encourages a positive approach to study and learning and a safe environment in which you can settle and enjoy your work and enrichment activities. We are proud of the behaviour of our students and have a record of excellent standards and the College will support you in meeting our high expectations.

You will receive a copy of the Student Code of Conduct and your tutor will discuss this with you in an early tutorial session. The Code of Conduct outlines the high expectations that we have about the behaviour of our students and that all members of the College community should be treated with courtesy and respect.

#### PROMOTING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Worcester Sixth Form College is committed to achieving equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy.

Any form of bullying or harassment is totally unacceptable in the College community and we expect that all students, staff and visitors are to be respected and valued equally. We take a very firm line on bullying and harassment of any kind and any such incident would be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.

#### PROMOTING BRITISH VALUES

The College is committed to promoting British Values including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Any student who holds or expresses views or exhibits behaviours that are contrary to these values should expect to be challenged.

#### RESTRAINT AND SEARCH

The College reserves the right to restrain students where there is a concern about the safety of an individual student or where other members of the College are believed to be at risk.

The College also reserves the right to search students, without their consent, for prohibited items including weapons, illegal drugs and stolen items. A full list of prohibited items can be found in the Student Conduct Policy available on our website or by request. The Policy also outlines any sanctions which might be used in the event of a breach of the Code of Conduct including where a suspension or exclusion might apply.

#### SMOKING & VAPING

The College is a non-smoking site (including the use of e-cigarettes or vapes). Students must not have any smoking paraphernalia (including cigarettes, tobacco or vapes) in their

possession whilst at College. Any student found to be smoking or vaping on the College site will be challenged and sent home, with repeat offenders subject to formal disciplinary procedures. Smoking and vaping are also prohibited on Spetchley Road in response to concerns expressed by our neighbours and members of the public. The children's parks on the Wildmore Estate and Weogoran Park are also out of bounds to students during the College day.

## TRAVELLING TO COLLEGE

### BUSES

If you live more than two miles from the College by the shortest walking route then it is possible to apply for financial support for travel. The College works closely with transport providers to ensure the services best meet the needs of our students. If you have any queries about travelling by bus, please speak to the Student Travel & Finance Officer based in Student Services in the first instance.

### CARS

It is only possible to provide limited space for student parking. Students who wish to park on site or at Nunnery Wood Sport Centre must register their intention with the Student Finance Officer. Please ensure that you park in designated bays only, respect the 10mph speed limit which is in place to ensure your safety in the car park and, if parking on neighbouring roads, be mindful that you are not blocking driveways. We have number plate recognition in operation onsite along with CCTV. Any incidents of driving dangerously, both on the College site and whilst driving to and from College, will be taken very seriously.

### TRAIN & TAXI

If you are travelling into Worcester city centre by train, please ask the Student Travel & Finance Officer about the taxi service in operation from the train stations to and from College.

### CYCLES

The College has a secure compound for bicycles and, if you have registered, your ID card will allow access. The use of secure 'D' or shackle locks is recommended to further maximise security.

### SKATEBOARDS, SCOOTERS, SEGWAYS ETC

Please do not bring these, or similar items into College as there are no storage facilities.



### IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN

The College is highly committed to maintaining the quality of its work and the explanation and presentation of its policies to students, parents and other members of the community. If you have a concern about any College related matters, please discuss them, in the first instance, with your tutor or Head of Year. From experience we know that a simple conversation can help to resolve many issues.

If your concerns are not resolved to your satisfaction the College has a Complaints Policy (available on the website) which outlines how to make a formal complaint, the process that will be followed and the right of appeal.

### MAKE A SUCCESSFUL START

Please don't hesitate to ask for help about any concerns you have. We are here to support you and to ensure that you make a really good start to your time in College and that your time with us is both enjoyable and successful.





