

# Aspire Programme »



Aspire  
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## ✿ Aspire Programme

Students who achieve an annual GCSE score of around 6 or above, are invited to join the College's Aspire Programme, at the beginning of their Lower Sixth.

The average GCSE score can vary slightly year-to-year – but it's usually just above 6. Students don't need to ask to be on the Aspire Programme as students with the right grade profiles will be invited to take part at enrolment.

Weekly Aspire tutorials run throughout the Lower Sixth and are offered in addition to regular weekly tutorials.

There are usually a maximum of 12 students in each Aspire group and each group is allocated its own dedicated Aspire Tutor.

## What's an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)?

An EPQ is an additional qualification, equivalent to half an A Level, that students complete in either their Lower or Upper Sixth, depending on their average GCSE score and career ambitions.

Most EPQs focus on independent research, resulting in an extended essay, but they can also take the form of an artefact or field study. The range of things students do for EPQs is endless – the priority is for students to focus on an area they are genuinely interested in.

Areas chosen are incredibly diverse from - Media literacy in schools, to increasing the power output of solar panels.

Some top universities award a lower offer if students achieve an A or A\* in their EPQ.

## ✿ Career Pathways

Going on to do something great with high grades is what really counts, which is why in their Lower Sixth year, students can start on one of thirteen Specialist Career Pathways, that they'll attend through to the Upper Sixth, as timetabled tutorial periods.

The thirteen Specialist Pathways are currently (in alphabetical order):

- Applying for Apprenticeships
- Architecture
- Biosciences/Chemistry
- Careers in Health
- Computer Science and IT
- Creative
- Humanities and Languages
- Law
- Music
- MVD (for aspiring Medics, Vets and Dentists)
- Oxbridge
- Performing Arts
- Psychology

Whether or not students are following a specialist pathway, in the Upper Sixth ALL students join one of two generic pathways that they follow during weekly tutorial time. These are the:

- University pathway, and
- Apprenticeship and Employment pathway

### MVD Pathway

Students doing both Chemistry and Biology A Levels, with an average GCSE score of 7 or above, who are interested in studying Medicine, Veterinary Science or Dentistry at university, can elect to join the MVD (Medics, Vets and Dentists) Programme at the beginning of their Lower Sixth.

The MVD Programme takes the form of an additional timetabled weekly tutorial (on top of regular tutorials in the Lower Sixth), through which students benefit from a whole programme of support. This includes: learning how to construct a reflective portfolio documenting their work experience, researching contemporary health related issues, debating major issues in Medical Ethics and attending talks from practicing medical professionals.

At the end of the Lower Sixth, based on their progress, MVD students then have the option to join the MVD Upper Sixth tutorial pathway to support them through the process of making MVD applications. This programme of support has an excellent track record of success in helping students gain offers to study Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science at the UK's top universities.

### Oxbridge Pathway

Students considering applying to Oxford or Cambridge are given additional support outside regular Aspire sessions in the Spring and Summer Terms of the Lower Sixth.

Depending on how they do in their progression exams at the end of their Lower Sixth, they're then invited to join the Upper Sixth Oxbridge tutorial pathway that's designed to support them through the rigorous selection process.

This targeted support, that's finely tuned each year, results in more and more Reigate College students being offered Oxbridge places – including first generation to go to university and students from other widening participation backgrounds.

Other examples include:

### Additional Enrichment Activities

In total there are around 50 lunchtime and after-College clubs and activities and some are run as a way of supporting specific career pathways.

For example the Women in STEM club, was set up to deliver targeted support for women interested in possible careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths – to help shed a light on the huge variety of job possibilities available.

Other examples include:

- Ancient Greek
- Debating,
- Model United Nations,
- Creative Writing, and
- Electronics

It pays for students to start thinking about what they might want to do, after they leave College, as soon as possible, that way they could benefit from being enrolled on both a specialist Career (tutorial) Pathway AND a relevant extra-curricular club or two, that are offered as part of the College's burgeoning Enrichment Programme.



### So how can the Aspire Programme help students?

The Aspire tutorials in the Lower Sixth are geared up to help students:

- Identify the things they're passionate about – so their hobbies and interests and things they love doing.
- Research different career possibilities using Careers quizzes and a variety of Careers tools the College subscribes to.
- Explore the huge range of course options accessible via the UCAS (universities) website
- Spend time looking into which universities offer the courses they're most interested in.
- Pin down the best combination of courses and universities to apply for, based around their predicted grades, and other personal criteria (such as distance from home)
- Begin writing their personal statements for their UCAS application
- Develop their academic, "super-curricular" interests – often via an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)





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