



Parent Update – March 2018

As we finish this week for term 2 of what has been a very productive and exciting year already, this update will provide you with information for the term ahead and some points of reflection from the term just completing.

Principal Reflection

Earlier this term, I shared my reflections from my drive home with staff following a very interesting day at UTC Reading. My words were, “On my drive home last night I was reflecting on the three days this week and felt really really proud to be part of this very special UTC. What we cram into every day alongside our core business of teaching and learning is truly remarkable and frankly is what makes us an outstanding and world class school.” In the fast paced world we live in, time for reflection is often considered a luxury and as a school we are constantly pushing forward. Sometimes we can be pushing so much that we forget to stop and celebrate the success and achievements of everyone in the UTC.

The week identified within my reflections above was what I would regard as a fairly typical 5 days at UTC Reading but I don't believe is typical of most schools.

For example, in the space of 5 days:

- We had a BTEC Centre quality Review – passed with no recommendations
- We had all of our Common Practical Assessment Criteria (CPAC) approved through A Level Biology on behalf of all A Level Sciences
- The Royal School of Artillery engaged with UTC Reading to consider shared teacher CPD activities and offer of visits and project work
- Engineering students visited Equinix to learn about data centres and the technology involved
- Year 13 Engineering students achieved fantastic results from their Unit 1 exam.
- Year 12 information evening for new students was a massive success, really positive feedback from our new recruits and parents
- We had 8 UTC Senior leaders from around the UK, one DFE advisor and one BDT Education Advisor running an employer engagement workshop. Once again it showed how strong this area of our UTC is but by far the most impressive feature of the day was four of our students responding to questions from the group. At times it was hard to tell who the adults were and who the children in the room were. They were totally inspiring and provided supportive and motivational feedback for all of the leaders in the room.
- We had an external review on our Teacher Effectiveness Enhancement Programme which was really interesting and provided a great opportunity to reflect on the impact of the programme to date and plan for the next steps
- We had an amazing employer engagement event providing mentoring for our KS5 students

- We were awarded the Royal Navy UTC Charter and they have expressed a clear interest in engaging with us on a much wider level
- The Royal Navy along with 3 x alumni presented to our 6th form to introduce the Royal Navy Junior Leaders Field Gun Competition
- Our three Royal Navy Challenge teams were preparing for their competition!
- Great promotion of International Women's Day
- Promotion of Pi day yesterday through the maths department
- And loads more I am sure

In amongst all of that, we strive to deliver engaging and inspiring lessons to our students to ensure they get the best start to achieving their career goals.

In the last week and running up to the end of term, our year 11 and 13 students have been sitting mock examinations which can be a daunting period for these year groups as it represents the last major practice before they sit their real exams next term. I am immensely proud of all of the students with how they have conducted themselves over this period whilst under pressure. I have seen an increase in focus and desire to do their very best. There is no doubt that further revision and preparation for the summer exams are required but the students have prepared themselves very well through these last two weeks.

What a fantastic term and one that all stakeholders can be immensely proud of. I know all of the students and staff are looking forward to a well earned break over the Easter period, a chance for all to rest, reflect and recuperate before the final term. Thank you for all of your support.

Information

Student recruitment

I am really pleased to say that our student recruitment campaign has been really successful this year. Whilst this continues right through until September when the new students start we are confident that we will be joined by 120 New Year 10 students and 160 New Year 12 students in September 2018.

Staff recruitment

In order to meet the needs of our growing UTC we have had a successful recruitment campaign for new staff to date with some further places to fill ready for September. We have recruited for Maths, English, Science and Engineering so far with some staff starting after the Easter break in preparation for September.

Easter Revision Sessions

We are holding a number of revision sessions during the Easter Break. Students should book onto these using the links below:

Science	https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ScienceRev
Maths	https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/MathsRev
Computing	https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ComputingRev
Engineering	https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/EngineeringRev

The schedule for revision is as follows:

Monday 2nd		
Science	9.00 - 12.00	Georgios Aronis Year 11 Chemistry and Physics
Science	13.00 - 16.00	Chemistry and Physics year 11
Tuesday 3rd		
Maths	9.00 - 12.00	Martin Standfield Yr12 Mechanics and vectors
Maths	13.00 - 1600	Martin Standfield Yr 13
Friday 6th		
Computing	10.00 - 15.00	Jax Snipp computing revision Year 11
Tuesday 10th		
Maths	9.30 - 12.30	Neill Seavers Yr 11 foundation
Maths	9.30 - 12.30	Cimen Sahin Yr 11 Higher
Maths	13.00 - 15.30	Cimen Sahin Yr 13 Core 3
Engineering	9.30 - 15.00	DEC Year 11
Engineering	9.30 - 15.00	BTEC Level 3
Wednesday 11th		
Engineering	9.00 - 15.00	BTEC Level 3
Thursday 12th		
Engineering	9.00 - 15.00	BTEC Level 3
Engineering	9.00 - 15.00	DEC Year 11
Friday 13th		
Maths	9.00 - 11.00	Paula Iveson Yr 11 Higher
Maths	9.00 - 11.00	Sheila Metcalf Yr 11 foundation
English	Revision tasks will be set and remotely marked for all students via the VLE. The expectation is students will complete these tasks over the Easter break. These will be marked and returned to them on w/c 16th April.	

Students returning 18th April 2018

All students will return after the Easter break on Wednesday 18th April. The 16th and 17th are staff inset days and the UTC will be closed to students. On the 18th we would like students to attend as follows:

Year 10 & 11 students arrive by 8:30 as normal.

Year 12 & 13 students arrive by 9:30.

Each key stage will have a student briefing when they arrive to set them up for the new term.

Year 10 and 12 Mock examination Week 25th - 29th June

During this week, students in year 10 and 12 will complete a mock examination week to measure their progress over their first year and to help us plan for their return in year 11 and 13 in September. A detailed timetable of these examination will be sent out nearer the time

Work Experience Week Year 10 and 12 - 9th - 13th July

All year 10 and 12 students are expected to complete work experience during this week. This is such a valuable part of their learning and an opportunity to network and build connections in the industry. We have been working with students all year to secure work placements. If you have already arranged a work experience placement for your child, please can you let us know where they are going and provide contact details so that we can update our records? If you need any further support with work experience please contact Sandra.taylor@utcreading.org.uk.

Activities and Catch-up Week 16th July - 20th July

For students who have below 90% attendance or for students who have not completed all of their academic studies including technical qualifications in year 10 and 12, there will be a catch-up week during the above dates. Students required for this week will be informed in advance along with parents. There will also be a range of activities taking place over the course of this week for year 10 and 12 students to attend. More information to follow in term 3.

Moving from Year 12 to 13

A reminder that to continue with studies from year 12 into year 13, students will need to achieve a minimum of a grade C. For those completing BTEC courses, they will need to complete all internally and externally assessed units planned for year 12 before the end of the academic year in July.

Summer Examination timetable for all students sitting public examinations

All students sitting public examinations in the summer term have been given provisional timetables to ensure all of the entry details are correct and will need to share any amendments required back to the exams officer, Andrea Coronel by 18th April 2018. These will then be finalised and they will be shared with students via paper copy. The provisional and final entry details are also available to view on both parent view and student view of progresso under the timetables tab where there is a section titled, Exam timetable.

Students requesting Absence for Religious Observance

If you wish to request an Absence from school for Religious Observance, please send a letter, marked Student Absence. This will then be passed for approval to the Senior Leadership Team. We will try our best to approve the absence but sometimes this cannot be approved if there are specific examinations taking place that the student will be sitting.

Parent Survey feedback

Thank you to everyone that provided feedback through the parent survey earlier this term. These surveys provide us with really powerful feedback.

Some key strengths from this survey:

- The majority of parents feel that UTC Reading helps their child to develop skills to prepare them for the workplace
- The majority of parents feel that their child is making good progress at the UTC
- The majority of parents feel that their child is taught well at the UTC

Areas for development:

From a deeper analysis of the data and the comments provided by those who responded it is clear that there are two distinct areas that parents would like to see improvements in. These are:

- Communication
- Clarity

In response to these points, we have relaunched the parent view of progresso so that parents are able to see timetables, examination information, behaviour, attendance and assessment data given instant access to important student information.

We have adjusted the timings for the parent's evenings to ensure that these fit in line with assessment points and provide timely information.

We have altered the information shared in the termly curriculum updates sent out to parents. We have added new information the UTCR website identifying the employer related work we do in more detail.

Whilst these adjustments bring about improvements, it is clear that parents would still like more communication focused on individual student progress. We are currently reviewing how best to share this information through our pastoral tutoring programme and I will update you in due course the plans for this.

Parent Forum

On the back of the parent survey, as we develop as a school the views of stakeholders is key to understanding what we are doing well, how we are improving and what we still need to work on. Staff members engage with parents in a number of different ways over the year and ideas are shared.

I would like to formalise this into a parent forum made up of 3 parent representatives for each year group to meet once per term (3 x per academic year) with SLT to discuss upcoming plans for the UTC. This would provide us with a valuable opportunity to gain parent views on some of the short and long term strategies we have for the UTC.

I am keen to start these forums next term so if you are interested in joining the forum, please email, Jessica.bryant@utcreading.org.uk to express your interest by 18th April 2018 and we will then identify some dates once an appropriate group has been formed. These forums are likely to take place at the end of the UTC day.

A reminder about standard operations

Punctuality

Please can you ensure that all students are leaving ample time to travel to UTC Reading in the morning. Whilst I am aware that the traffic can be a challenge in Reading, it is vital that students are here ready to start lessons at 8:30. The building is open from 7am, students can come and use the ILZ to work on their laptops. The dining room starts serving breakfast from 7.45am.

Dress code

Please can you ensure that all students are leaving home equipped with the appropriate clothing to meet the requirements of the dress code. This is available on our website as a reminder [HERE](#). This includes their lanyard and ID badge. For year 10 and 11 students, please note the requirements for sportswear for sports lessons.

Dates for your diaries

16th and 17th April 2018 - Staff Inset – UTCR closed to students

18th April 2018 - Students return to UTCR – 8.30am Year 10 and 11, 9.30am Year 12 and 13

19th April 2018 – New year 12 information evening

25th April 2018 – Year 11 parents evening – invite only

30th April 2018 – year 13 Parents evening – Invite only

7th May 2018 – Bank Holiday

28th May – 1st June – May half term

Kind regards



Jonathan Nicholls
Principal

Follow us:



T: 0118 938 1020
E: enquiries@utcreading.org.uk
W: www.utcreading.org.uk