



EASTER EDITION

DUKE'S SECONDARY SCHOOL

CAREERS NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2026

THEME OF THE MONTH
UNIVERSITY AND HIGHER-LEVEL OPTIONS

RECENT NEWS

HIGHER EDUCATION SPOTLIGHT: A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE NORTH EAST?

UNDERSTANDING LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION

OPPORTUNITIES IN THE NORTH EAST



A Month of Opportunity Getting Ready for the Future...

March has been an exciting and productive month at Duke's, with a heavy focus on careers and preparing our students for their futures. From the classroom to industry hubs, our students have been actively exploring their next steps.

DUKE'S SPOTLIGHT

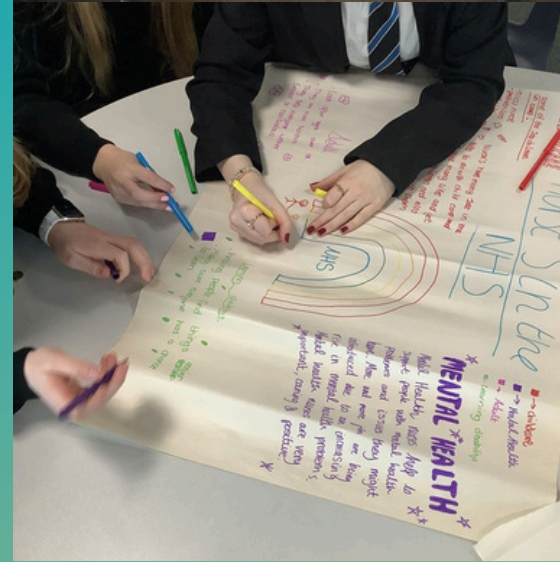
National Careers Week & World of Work Day: We hosted over 40 employers, educational establishments and training providers for a large-scale careers fair, allowing students to network and discover local opportunities.

Navigating Options: Year 9 students worked with the University of Sunderland to align their GCSE choices with future goals. Meanwhile we were proud to support 50 of our students who attended the NextGen Nursing event to explore healthcare careers, inspiring many to consider future roles in nursing.

Professional Skills: Year 10 engaged in the Barclays Life Skills workshop to master CV writing to prepare them for upcoming work experience. The session provided valuable insight into how to present themselves to employers and tips on how to stand out when looking for opportunities.

Apprenticeship Pathways: Year 11 and Year 13 students visited the Energy Central Campus in Blyth, meeting industry professionals to discuss vocational routes.

It has been fantastic to see our students engage so confidently with visitors. We look forward to carrying this momentum into the summer term as we continue to inspire, inform and prepare our learners for life beyond school.



IS UNIVERSITY THE RIGHT CHOICE?

One of the biggest questions students face...

Deciding on a potential career path is one of the biggest milestones of a young person's life - and one of the biggest questions students face as they progress through school is whether university is the right path for them.

Higher Education can be an excellent option that opens many doors and can be highly rewarding, but it's certainly not the only route to success. It's also not a 'one-size fits all' solution. By weighing the pros and cons, you can better support your child confidently in making an informed choice that fits their future. Some young people thrive in academic environments, whilst others excel through hands-on experience.

Apprenticeships, entering the work-force and taking a gap year are all extremely valuable alternatives. What matters most is finding a path that suits your child's strengths, interests and ambitions.

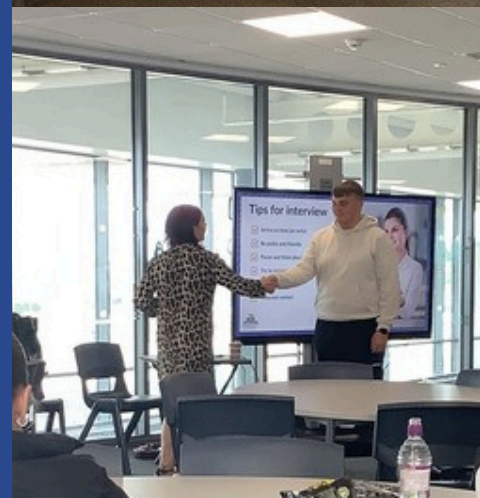
The key is to keep conversations open and explore all options. Support your child in choosing the path that feels right for them. Their future is theirs to shape and with your guidance as parents, they can take the next step with confidence.

Useful Tools for Students

These tools help students connect their interests to real career options...

Unifrog Careers Library: Explore careers, entry routes, skills and qualifications required. All students can access the library through their individual log-in.

Careerometer: Compare jobs by salary, hours, and future prospects. Visit the Careerometer on our school website.



HIGHER EDUCATION

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS



NCEA DUKE'S
SECONDARY SCHOOL

Deciding on university is a major milestone for students. While higher education offers many opportunities, it isn't the only path to success. By weighing the pros and cons, you can better support your child confidently in making an informed choice that fits their future.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS

A pathway into careers

Graduating with a degree can provide a strong foundation for entering many professions, with some requiring specific qualifications. University can be the first step toward achieving long-term career goals.

Personal growth and independence

University is a time when young people develop independence, learn life skills and build confidence. Living away from home, managing finances and balancing responsibilities all contribute towards personal growth.

Work experience and employability

Many courses offer placements, internships or work experience opportunities that enhance a student's CV and give a clearer sense of their future career path.

Exploring options early

Encourage your child to attend open days or try "taster" experiences as they can help them get a feel for courses before making the commitment - such as Springpod Subject Tasters.

Learning from experts:

Students are taught by experienced lecturers, researchers and industry professionals, helping them deepen their knowledge and develop a genuine passion for their chosen subject.

Social Opportunities & Networks

From societies & clubs to meeting people from diverse backgrounds, university life offers rich social experiences and connections leading to lifelong friendships and valuable professional networks.

Flexibility and self-direction

Students have more control over their schedules and learning styles, allowing them to focus on what interests them most and develop strong time-management skills.

POTENTIAL DOWNSIDES

Financial commitment

For most students, university involves taking out loans to cover tuition and living costs. Understanding how student finance works is essential before making a decision.

Academic demands

The jump from school-level study to a degree can be significant. Students are expected to work more independently, often with less direct support from tutors.

Emotional adjustment

Moving away from home can be exciting but also overwhelming. Adjusting to a new environment can impact wellbeing, although universities usually provide support services.

Heavy workload

Many courses involve extensive reading and research. If your child prefers practical learning, it's worth exploring courses that offer a more hands-on approach.

Time management challenges

With multiple deadlines across different modules, students need to stay organised. Those who struggle with time management may find this particularly challenging.

**University is not a
'one-size fits all'**



THE NORTH EAST: What's happening right now?

North East £104 million Creative Industry

North East Mayor Kim McGuinness has announced a record £104 million funding package to revitalize the region's creative industries and infrastructure. The investment includes £24 million for a new large-scale arena at Gateshead Quays, alongside broader support for film studios and grassroots cultural venues.



Newcastle International Airport £165 million boost to economy

Newcastle International Airport is advancing plans for AirLink, a 620,000sq ft logistics hub designed to create thousands of jobs and boost the regional economy by £165 million annually. This cargo facility will serve as a primary trade gateway for freight operators and ground handlers. It marks a first-of-its-kind development for the North East.



North East £22 million Housing Drive

North East Mayor Kim McGuinness has announced a £22 million investment to transform derelict sites in Ashington, Blyth, Sunderland, Tyneside and more, unlocking over 1,100 new homes across the region. This funding will prepare brownfield land for development, leveraging nearly £200 million in additional backing to provide a mix of affordable housing and the creation of 270 construction jobs.





LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION

A guide for parents...

As students begin choosing their GCSE options and thinking about post-16 pathways, having the right information is key. Labour Market Information (LMI) helps families understand the world of work and make informed decisions about the future.

What is LMI?

LMI provides insights into local industries and employers, types of jobs and what they involve. It tells us the skills employers are looking for and important information such as salaries and career progression, taking out the guesswork from career planning and links education choices to real opportunities.

Why does it matter?

LMI is especially useful when students are choosing their GCSE options, as it helps them pick subjects that link to in-demand careers. It also helps plan post-16 routes. Whether it's Sixth Form, College or Apprenticeship - LMI shows which pathway leads to the strongest prospects.

Opportunities in the North East...

The North East Combined Authority has identified key growth sectors driving the region's economy. These strategic areas employ almost 100,000 people across 7,300+ businesses:

- **Advanced Manufacturing**
- **Energy**
- **Digital**
- **Health and Life Sciences**

A further 250,000 people work in supporting sectors such as education, construction, transport and logistics, and financial and professional services. Looking ahead, there are expected to be over 400,000 job openings by 2027, including roles in:

- **Professional occupations**
- **Caring and service roles**
- **Technical and skilled trades**
- **Sales, admin, and management**