

Essential information for students, parents and carers

Important note

The information in this document assumes that college is operating as normal throughout 2023-24.

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Welcome to Blackpool Sixth

I am delighted that you have chosen to join Blackpool Sixth for the next step in your education and I would like to extend a very warm welcome to you.

Blackpool Sixth is an inclusive, caring, supportive and aspirational college as confirmed by Ofsted during our most recent inspection. “*Students find The Blackpool Sixth Form College a truly aspirational place to learn.*” Students achieve outstanding success due to the quality of our teaching, learning and support, our high expectations, strong core values and dedicated staff who go above and beyond for our students. This, combined with the invaluable support from parents and carers, make it a perfect environment for all our students to thrive and succeed.

I hope that you find this handbook a useful resource. You will find information about important matters, including student attendance, travel, college policies, student support and health and well-being.

Our Blackpool Sixth Expects document also gives guidance on what is expected of students in terms of their studies and general behaviour whilst at college. It clearly sets out the high standards that Blackpool Sixth expects of itself to ensure all our students receive the best teaching and support to enable them to achieve their full potential. Our aim is to provide students with a positive learning experience that helps them to make a smooth and confident transition onto their next step after Blackpool Sixth, whether this is university, employment with training, an apprenticeship or another route to support their future career.

Blackpool Sixth values a positive partnership between the college, our students and their parents/carers; effective communication, therefore, is very important to us. The parent portal gives parents/carers direct access to up-to-date attendance and progress data. Please also visit our website <https://www.blackpoolsixth.ac.uk> for regularly updated news and information about college events and activities.

Please do not hesitate to contact any member of staff should you need to – we are all here to help make your time with us as positive and successful as possible.

Wishing you every happiness during your time with us.

Jill Gray

Principal

Our mission and core values

Our mission: Inspiring learning, developing character, building futures

The core values listed below underpin everything we do as a college and as a community:

Respect – for ourselves, for others, for the rule of law, for the environment

Excellence and High Aspirations – striving to be the best we can be

Support – helping everyone to succeed

Inclusion – valuing everyone individually

Integrity – upholding our values

Global Citizenship – being active in improving our world and broadening horizons

Enthusiasm – learning because we love to learn, teaching because we love to teach

Important dates for 2023 – 2024

24th August - GCSE results day

24th & 25th August – Enrolment for new students

6th & 7th September – Induction Days for lower sixth (L6) and Route3 students

11th September – Normal timetable for all students

20th September – Welcome Evening for all parents/carers of new students

23rd October to 3rd November– Half term (college closed to students & public)

27th November to 1st December - Mock examination week - U6/R3/Vocational students with Jan exams

19th December – Students finish for Christmas (college closed to all over Christmas)

4th January – College opens for spring term

25th January – Parents/carers consultation evening for all students (surname A-K)

31st January – Parents/carers consultation evening for all students (surname L-Z)

12th to 16th February – Half term (college closed to students & public)

26th February to 1st March – Mock examination week - U6/R3

4th March to 8th March - Mock examination week - L6

28th March - Remote learning day - students learn remotely from home

28th March – Building Futures Evening for lower sixth parents/carers

28th March – Students finish for Easter

15th April – College opens for summer term

6th May – May Day Bank Holiday

27th May – 31st May- Half term

18th June - Remote learning day for lower sixth - students learn remotely from home

3rd July – Students finish for summer

Study Programmes and entry requirements

All students will have a study programme which will include:

- Main area of study (A Levels, Level 3 vocational courses e.g. BTEC/CTEC/criminology/finance/T Level, Level 2 BTECs/finance and GCSEs, where appropriate).
- Progress mentor group session
- Progress mentor 1:1 review meetings
- Study sessions outside of timetable lesson time
- Course enrichment, e.g. course-related visits and visiting speakers from higher education and industry
- Extra-curricular enrichment, e.g. 6Xtra activities and/or 6Advance
- Work experience, e.g. employability skills development, employer talks, work/industry placements or volunteering placements (placements are essential for students progressing to routes other than higher education (HE), for those progressing to HE courses that require work placement, and for students on the Route3 programme)
- English and mathematics GCSE studies (where grade 4 has not yet been achieved)

In addition, study programmes may also include:

- Additional qualifications (e.g. Community Sports Leaders Award)
- The Excellence Programme

Please see <https://www.blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/study-programmes/> for more information and entry requirements for the four different courses of study listed below:

The A Level Programme

The Vocational Programme, including T Levels

The Combined Programme

Route3

The Excellence Programme

The Excellence Programme has been designed to support the achievement and progression of the highest performing students. Entry to the programme is based on an average GCSE score of 7.0 or above and will be determined automatically at enrolment. Please see <https://blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/excellence/> for more details.

6Advance

As part of our Excellence Programme, we offer students the opportunity to enrich their studies through a range of academies, clubs and societies. Please click [here](#) for more details.

Entry to each of the 6Advance academies, clubs and societies is selective and will be based on an application made early in the autumn term. The academies then run for the rest of the academic year. Progress mentors will give further details during progress mentor sessions.

Academic Support Tutorials (ASTs)

Each class has an AST session incorporated into the timetable. ASTs are 20 minutes in duration but may be “collected” up over a few weeks and then used in longer sessions. Possible AST models are detailed below:

- feedback based sessions, to provide academic support following a diagnostic and/or key assessment for students who have underperformed
- ‘stretch and challenge’ sessions
- skills-based sessions, designed to develop (e.g.) extended writing skills
- synoptic learning sessions, to encourage retention of previously learned material/knowledge
- catch up sessions to recover missed learning during the COVID-19 pandemic
- professional behaviour development sessions
- study/revision skills development

Independent/Study Session Time

Students should expect to spend **at least** four hours on independent study every week for **each** of their subjects. Students will be set independent/study session tasks such as:

- preparation work for future lessons
- wider reading
- research tasks
- completion of homework or assignments
- coursework assignment work

Progress mentors can help students to make effective use of their independent study time/study sessions.

Enrichment programme (6Xtra)

As part of Blackpool Sixth's commitment to developing and broadening students' skills and enjoyment of college life, we offer a varied programme of additional activities to enrich their studies, including sports, work placement, mentoring, leadership, volunteering, etc. Please see the college website or the student's progress mentor for more details.

All students are encouraged to take part in some enrichment whilst at college. Most activities are free and open to any student. There will also be sports teams, academies and many clubs and societies to choose from. It's a great way to enhance your job or university applications, as well as being a fun way to spend time with friends.

Some enrichment activities take place off college premises. Transport will usually be provided.

Progress mentors will give further details during progress mentor sessions.

Changing a subject

Students are expected to show a commitment to their studies and continue with each of their chosen courses for the entire programme duration.

Occasionally, students may find they have made an unsuitable choice for a variety of reasons. There is a course change window for new students from the beginning of the academic year to Friday 22nd September. Any request for a course change outside of this window will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Please note, some courses with early examination dates have an earlier course change window deadline of Monday 18th September.

Any student who has concerns about their programme of study and course choices should speak to their progress mentor in the first instance.

Minimum Expected Grades (MEG)

Robust target setting is key to ensuring that teachers and students know and achieve their potential. Students are provided with a Minimum Expected Grade (MEG) at the start of their course, usually after October half term. The MEG is based on the student's average achievement at GCSE (level 2). We have high aspirations for our students and the MEGs reflect this.

- Level 3 subjects (A levels and level 3 vocational): MEGs are calculated using a national data set that reflects the progress made by students in the top 25% of schools and colleges. This means that MEGs are, therefore, aspirational.

- GCSE Maths and English: we expect students to make at least one grade progress. For instance, if a student has achieved a grade 3 at GCSE the previous year then the MEG would be a grade 4
- Level 2 BTEC courses, the MEG for almost all students is a Merit.

Academic Monitoring Reports (AMRs) are sent to parents/carers for all students in November, April and in June (for lower sixth students only). Either side of these dates each student's performance is regularly monitored and, where progress appears to be falling below minimum expectations, students may be directed to additional learning activities, such as "Elevate" support sessions, academic support tutorials (ASTs) and/or receive extra support from their teachers, progress mentor or member of the additional learning support team.

MEGs are grades which are set for students at the beginning of their course; all in-year assessments and progress monitoring are mapped against these targets. It should be recognised that MEGs are 'end of course grades' so students may not yet be achieving the MEG.

Route3 programme and progression to Lower Sixth

Progression from Route3 to L6 is not automatic. Students studying on the Route3 programme will need to demonstrate high attendance, a commitment to their studies and develop the skills they need for success at Level 3.

At the end of the Route3 year students must have achieved the following in their level 2 studies to progress to level 3:

- at least a merit in their BTEC subject(s)
- make progress in their GCSE English and/or GCSE Maths, achieving at least 1 grade higher than their grade achieved last year
- obtain at least a C grade in the LIBF Certificate in Financial Education course (if applicable)

Communication with parents/carers

At Blackpool Sixth we recognise the commitment parents and carers make in supporting their daughter/son/ward's learning, so we aim to work in partnership.

Parents/carers are welcome to enquire at any time about their daughter/son/ward's progress, or any other matter. Please either telephone the college and ask to speak to the student's progress mentor or contact the member of staff directly via email.

Progress mentors, teachers or heads of department will get in touch with parents/carers from time to time, and particularly if there is any reason for concern about a student's work, well-being, attendance or punctuality.

Students over 18 years of age are advised to inform their Progress Mentor if they do not wish college to contact their parents/carers.

In addition to the above, we keep parents/carers involved in a variety of ways:

Weekly notices

Parents/carers have access to information for the coming week at college through the parent portal.

Email

Newsletters and progress reports will also be sent to parents/carers via email. It is important that the college is informed of any changes to email addresses by sending the details to enquiries@blackpoolsixth.ac.uk. Parents/carers are advised to check email preferences to ensure emails from the college do not go directly into junk mail folders.

Website and social media

There is a wealth of information and news items available on our frequently updated website <https://www.blackpoolsixth.ac.uk> and on social media through the college's Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, accounts. @blackpoolsixth

Parent portal

The parent portal is an online tool giving parents/carers direct access to their daughter/son/ward's up-to-date attendance and progress data. Information about how to access the parent portal will be provided to parents/carers who are named on the student enrolment form and have provided a personal email address.

If the college has a valid email address for parents/carers then account details, including username and password, will be automatically sent by email in the early part of the autumn term.

Membership cards

We take the safety of our students very seriously.

Access to Blackpool Sixth is via access controlled entrances operated by membership cards. All staff and students must wear their membership card visibly on a Blackpool Sixth lanyard around their neck whilst on the college site, in lessons and examinations, when using college facilities or when taking part in college activities. This helps us to ensure the safety of all members of the college and to confirm that only recognised visitors are welcomed onto the site. Anyone persistently not visibly wearing a membership card may face disciplinary action

Students who forget to bring their membership card to college will be asked to report to reception. They will be issued with a temporary membership sticker for the day.

Students must pay a £2 fee for a replacement lost membership card and lanyard. Replacement cards can be obtained from the college print room, Refill.

Students who persistently forget or lose their membership card may face disciplinary action and may be required to pay a £10 deposit for a replacement card and lanyard, the deposit is refundable once the membership card or lanyard is returned.

The Blackpool Sixth day

Overview

Blackpool Sixth is open from 8:00 am until 5:00 pm on Monday to Thursday and 8:00 am to 4:30 pm on Friday, during term time.

Timetable classes are generally arranged in sessions 1 to 6 but some activities, such as sport, enrichment activities and field trips take place outside these hours, and special arrangements are then made for students to have whatever access to Blackpool Sixth facilities they need.

Students can view their timetable via the student portal. Parents can also view their daughter/son/ward's timetable via the parent portal.

Timetable for 2023/24

Students will typically have between 2 and 4 lessons per day, across a range of subjects, if students are studying more than one subject. Each single subject will have four 70-minute lessons. The images below provide two example timetables - an example timetable for a student studying three A-levels (example 1) and an example timetable for a student studying a combination of A-levels and vocational qualifications (example 2).

Example 1

	Session 1	break 20	Session 2	break 20	Session 3	break 20	Session 4	break 20	Session 5	break 20	Session 6
Monday			Pastoral Mentor 10:15		Geography 11:30		Lunch 12:40				Biology 14:45
Tuesday	Economics 08:45		Economics 10:15		Lunch 11:25				Geography 13:30		
Wednesday	Biology 08:45				Lunch 11:25				Geography 13:30		
Thursday	Biology 08:45		Biology 10:00		Break / Lunch 11:10				Economics 13:30		
Friday					Geography 11:30		Lunch 12:40				Economics 14:45

Example 2

	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6
Monday	Travel & Tourism 08:45	Travel & Tourism 10:00	Break / Lunch 11:10		Graphics 13:30	
Tuesday			Travel & Tourism 11:30	Lunch 12:40		Graphics 14:45
Wednesday	Travel & Tourism 08:45	Travel & Tourism 10:00	Break / Lunch 11:10		Pastoral Mentor 13:30	
Thursday	Travel & Tourism 08:45	Travel & Tourism 10:00	Break / Lunch 11:10	Graphics 12:15		
Friday		Graphics 10:15	Lunch 11:25		Travel & Tourism 13:30	

In sessions where a student has no timetabled lesson, this time should be used for independent or directed study time. For example, students can work in our resource area (the FYi). If this “study session” falls at the start or end of the day a student can choose to come into college later or leave earlier.

Reception

Reception is located on the ground floor of the main building and is staffed from 8:15 am to 4.30 pm, Monday to Friday during term-time. Enquiries can be directed to reception in person, or by telephone, using the main Blackpool Sixth number 01253 394911.

Equality and diversity

Blackpool Sixth is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and study. The college is opposed to all forms of discrimination inline with the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011 and as defined by the Equality Act 2010, whether direct, perceived, indirect or by association.

The college seeks to ensure that no individual or group, because of their protected characteristic, faces discrimination, harassment or victimisation. Protected characteristics refer to: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Promoting, celebrating and valuing diversity and ensuring equality are at the heart of the college’s core values, and will benefit the college in all aspects of its members’ performance. These encompass the British values of mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith, the rule of law, individual liberty and democracy.

No member of college should act in a way that might cause distress or embarrassment to another person, either intentionally or not. The college will take very seriously any instances of noncompliance to the college’s equality and diversity policy by staff, students or other members of the college community. All instances will be investigated and appropriate disciplinary action taken. Students should report any bullying or harassment to their progress mentor, a member of staff in whom they feel they can confide or a member of the Senior Leadership Team, who will take appropriate action. The policy is available on <https://blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/policies/>.

Please find the link to the faith space guidelines [here](#).

Acceptable use of computers

We have outstanding IT facilities for students that are used inside and outside lesson time to support and enhance learning. Blackpool Sixth has a very clear Acceptable Use of Computers Policy which each student agrees to the first time they log in to the student portal. Failure to comply with the policy could result in disciplinary action being taken. During induction lessons all students are given information, advice and guidance about responsible and safe use of IT and the internet. See also "[Technology for learning - bring your own device](#)"

The filtering of internet content provides an important means of preventing users from accessing material that is illegal or is inappropriate in an educational context. This filtering will also be active on any device loaned by the college to students. No filtering system can guarantee 100% protection against access to unsuitable sites, therefore, members of the safeguarding team monitor safe internet usage daily using log file reports.

Cyber-security

IT and password security is becoming more important as online threats increase. To help improve college security, we implement a password policy and will be introducing two factor authentication across more of our systems.

Attendance and punctuality

Regular and punctual attendance at lessons is crucial to the success of our students. We monitor attendance at all lessons and other timetabled activities using an electronic register system. We record each student's official attendance (this includes authorised absences) and their actual attendance (excludes authorised absences).

Parents/carers will be informed if students show low attendance, declining attendance, a pattern of missing sessions without explanation or if they show poor punctuality. Poor attendance and punctuality could lead to disciplinary action in line with the attendance policy and the positive behaviour policy and disciplinary procedures. These policies are available on <https://blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/policies/>

Students are able to see their attendance on the student portal. Parents/carers can also view up-to-date attendance records using the online parent portal (see <https://www.blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/parents/parent-portal/> for further details).

Term time holidays or requests for special leave

Blackpool Sixth expects college to take priority. This means that other activities should be arranged outside of a students' college commitments, for example, all holidays must be taken outside of term time.

It is recognised that there may be very rare occasions where a student may require a leave of absence from college due to significant extenuating circumstances. In this scenario, permission must be sought from the college by completing a special leave request form. This is available on the policies page of our website and can also be requested from a student's Progress Mentor.

Requests received within 10 college days before the leave is due to start may not be considered and the leave, if taken, will be unauthorised. Any student who takes unauthorised leave may face formal disciplinary action in line with the college's Positive Behaviour Policy and Disciplinary Procedures. Please refer to the college's Special Leave Policy, available at <https://blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/policies>, for more information.

Absence procedures

At Blackpool Sixth, we expect students to let their Progress Mentor and subject teachers know in advance if they are going to be absent from classes due to a scheduled appointment.

For unforeseen absences, we expect students, or their parent/carer, to email the student's Progress Mentor or telephone 01253 394911 before 09.15am on the first day of absence.

Reported student illness, unless supported by a doctor's note, will be classed as a known absence. Students who feel unwell whilst in college should report to their Progress Mentor or key support worker. If it is agreed the student needs to go home this will be recorded as a known absence. Students who go home ill without reporting will be marked as an unknown absence.

A list of example authorised absence reasons (providing college is notified in advance) and examples of unacceptable reasons for absence are available as part of the college's Student Attendance Policy. This is on the policy page of the college website <https://blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/policies>.

Maintaining learning during/following absence

Whatever the reason for absence, it is the student's responsibility to request and complete the work missed as quickly as possible.

It is recognised that during absences due to illness or injury, a student may not be able to engage with learning (a student's health is always the priority), but they must maintain communication with the college during periods of absence.

If students do not take active steps to catch up on missed work, they will fall behind with their studies and may face disciplinary action in line with the positive behaviour policy and disciplinary procedures.

Long-term sickness

The college will make reasonable adjustments to support a student to maintain learning during periods of long-term sickness or medical conditions through the Fitness to Study procedures (see <https://blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/policies/> for further details on our SEND Policy)

Change of circumstances

It is important that all our records are fully up to date. Students must inform their Progress Mentor of any change in personal circumstances, for example home address, email address or telephone number. Students can also advise of change of details via the Student Portal.

Safeguarding and confidentiality

Blackpool Sixth is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students, staff and visitors. All staff will be carefully selected using recruitment and selection procedures designed to emphasise our commitment to safeguarding. All posts, including volunteers, are subject to enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance.

Safeguarding and protecting the welfare young people involves:

- protecting them from maltreatment, abuse and/or neglect;
- preventing impairment of mental or physical health;
- taking action to enable all young people to have the best outcomes.

Blackpool Sixth actively promotes health awareness amongst students. Each member of the college community has an individual responsibility for health and safety. We have trained first aiders on site at all times and access to a first aid room.

Blackpool Sixth staff cannot offer absolute confidentiality to students. There are clear situations when it is essential that staff share information with parents/carers and/or with external agencies such as social services or the police, for instance when there is suspicion or evidence that a student is in danger of being harmed or abused.

A student should talk to their progress mentor or any member of staff if they have any concerns about their safety/well-being or the safety/well-being of others.

If anybody else has any concerns about any safeguarding issues, please speak with or contact any member of staff. Alternatively, email safeguarding.alert@blackpoolsixth.ac.uk. The safeguarding and child protection policy is available on <https://blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/policies/>.

Young People in Care, Care Leavers, and Young Carers

If you are a young person in care, a care leaver or a young carer, we are committed to meeting your needs in a sensitive and confidential way that is right for you. It is important that this is disclosed to college so that we can offer this support. There may be additional financial assistance available as well as academic and personal support. For more information about the support we offer for any students who are now, or ever have been, in care/looked after, or students who are living independently, please contact Carey Guite (carey.guite@blackpoolsixth.ac.uk)

Safety and first aid

Blackpool Sixth is a very safe and secure learning environment. In the unlikely event that students have an accident (or a near miss) at Blackpool Sixth, they should report it to a member of staff nearby or to reception. If necessary a First Aider will be contacted.

Students who are feeling unwell may seek assistance from any member of staff or from The Link or the Focus Centre. A first aider will be called to attend to them if necessary.

Parents/carers will be contacted if a student is too ill to remain in college. In this situation we expect parents/carers to make appropriate arrangements to transport the student home safely or to meet the student at the hospital if a first aider has decided that further medical treatment is needed.

Progress Mentors

All students are allocated a progress mentor who will offer support and guidance throughout their time at Blackpool Sixth.

Progress mentors will help students to settle into college quickly, monitor their academic progress, personal development and attendance, and support students with applications for positive progression after college. The progress mentor is central to everything students do and is an initial line of support for students whilst at college. Progress mentors are located across college in progress mentor 'hubs'.

Every student is a member of a progress mentor group and attends a weekly group session. Progress mentors deliver the pastoral curriculum, which is an integral part of students' learning and development. It supports them to succeed on their programmes of study, prepare for adulthood and progress into higher education, apprenticeships or employment with training.

Students will also have one-to-one meetings with their progress mentor to discuss academic progress, personal development, and agree individual improvement targets.

Additional support for students

Blackpool Sixth provides support for students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. We support students with a variety of needs, relating to mobility and wheelchair access, visual or hearing impairment, dyslexia, dyspraxia, communication needs and medical conditions such as mental health conditions, diabetes or epilepsy.

The Additional Learning Support (ALS) team is based in the Focus Centre at college and students are welcome to speak to a member of the team if they have any concerns. If a parent/carer feels that support may be needed at Blackpool Sixth, please contact the ALS team on 01253 394911, or email ALS@blackpoolsixth.ac.uk

- Counselling requests for support can be made by speaking with a member of Additional Learning support.

FYi – The learning resource centre

FYi (For Your Information) is the name given to our fully equipped Learning Resource Centre. The state-of-the-art facilities have been carefully designed to aid students' learning. The FYi is a quiet place for students to study with an extensive range of resources for their use in a modern and comfortable environment. There are thousands of books, access to Apple Mac computers and a dedicated area to use your own devices. The centre also provides 24-hour access to university-style databases for use at home and college for both students and staff.

FYi Study Advisors support students' learning by helping them to find and use information so they become independent learners ready for life after college. They can also assist with developing study skills throughout the year covering areas like organisation, exam techniques, time management, revisions skills and stress busting. This service is designed to enhance the support given by the Progress Mentors as part of the pastoral curriculum.

Please note that food is not permitted in the FYi; however, drinks are allowed as long as they are secured with a lid. We ask that you leave the workspace clean and tidy for the next person's use. Bins are provided for your litter throughout the area. We also ask students to keep mobile devices on silent or vibrate.

The FYi is open each day between 8:00 am until 5:00 pm on Monday to Thursday and 8:00 am to 4:30 pm on Friday during term time. We are also open 8.30am to 4.00pm during the Easter holidays and during the May half term. The FYi is closed on all bank holidays.

Careers education, information, advice and guidance

The college's pastoral curriculum provides all students with careers advice and guidance. Students also have access to our Level 6 qualified Careers Advisors for one to one personal guidance meetings.

Separate careers events, visits and guest speakers are organised at appropriate times of the year. These events offer students the opportunity to meet university representatives as well as apprenticeship and training providers and local and national employers. The college is dedicated to fulfilling the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks to ensure it has the core dimensions of good career and enterprise provision for all students.

Individual advice and guidance on choosing career paths, apprenticeships, employment with training and higher education/university courses is available from our Futures Team, situated in the FYi.

Students can also access support with applications, CV preparation and mock interviews from local employers as well as college staff.

Work placements

Work placement and virtual work experience gives students an insight into their chosen career and the skills needed to improve their chances of making a successful job, apprenticeship or university applications in the future. Opportunities for both face to face and virtual work placements are advertised to all students in a variety of ways; email, social media, website, etc. Any student wishing to take up an opportunity should arrange a meeting with the Work Placement Officer to find out more information.

Students who have a work/industry placement module attached to their subject will have to undertake and evaluate a work placement as an integral part of their study programme. This requirement of work placement will count towards their final grade and it is imperative that all necessary hours are completed in line with the awarding body's guidance at the time. Students undertaking work/industry placement within their subject will be guided and supported by their teacher/s and the Work Placement Officer.

Students are encouraged to source their own placements, where possible, and should be proactive in communicating with the placement's point of contact prior to starting any hours. Prior to any work placement that takes place students need to contact the Work Placement Officer in plenty of time to ensure that all essential health and safety arrangements have been made. Parents/carers will be required to sign a consent form if the student is under 18 years of age.

Students studying a subject within the Business and IT department including A Level Accounting, Business Studies, Computer Science, Economics, BTEC Business, BTEC IT and LIBF Diploma in Financial Studies as well as students studying Maths have the opportunity to apply to join the Career Ready programme. Students who are successful in gaining a place on this program are required to take part in an internship. Students are encouraged to source their own placements and will be supported by their teachers and the Work Placement Officer

Financial support: transport, free meals and childcare

If you choose to study at Blackpool Sixth, we will do everything possible to support you. There is a range of financial support available to you during your time studying with us. Depending on eligibility, the college may provide help with meals, transport, course-related costs and much more. The level of support you are eligible for will be based on your household's financial circumstances.

See the college website <https://www.blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/student-support/financial-support/> for full details of each tier of financial support and the application process.

Please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Student Finance team either via email on bursary@blackpoolsixth.ac.uk or call 01253 307096 (direct line) or via the college switchboard on 01253 394911 if you have any questions.

Subsidised transport support

Blackpool Sixth recognises that the cost of transport is a major concern for some young people and their families. Our subsidised transport schemes not only help with transport costs to and from college but could also provide unlimited travel throughout the day, including evenings and weekends and during the college holidays.

Please see <https://www.blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/student-support/transport/> for up-to-date information about subsidised transport. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the student finance team via email on student.finance@blackpoolsixth.ac.uk or 01253 394911.

External and mock examinations

External examinations

IMPORTANT - please note that external examination dates are set nationally by the Joint Council for Qualifications and awarding organisations and cannot be moved by the college.

A levels

- For the majority of A level subjects, students will be required to sit external examinations during May and June of their final year of study.
- Art, textiles, photography, graphics and fine art practical examinations take place between March and May of the final year of study.
- Modern foreign language oral examinations also take place between March and May of the final year of study.

GCSEs

- Students who have not gained a grade 4 in GCSE English and mathematics are required to continue studying these qualifications. The college will determine whether a student is entered for the external examinations in the November or the summer exam season dependent on initial assessment and progress.

Level 2 and Level 3 BTECs, CTECs and LIBF qualifications

- The majority of RQF BTEC and CTEC qualifications incorporate an external examination or assessment element which may be either computer based or a traditional exam question paper. Depending on the qualification this may be an exam with scheduled exam dates set by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) or the relevant department will choose the exam window which best fits their teaching schedule.

T Levels

T Level external assessments are split into 2 parts. The core component includes 2x formal exams as well as an employer set project. There are 2 assessment windows that can be chosen for this, either May/June of year 1 or November/December of year 2. The 2nd part is a synoptic assessment based on the occupational specialism of Digital Support. This is sat towards the end of Year 2. The exam dates/windows are set by the exam board (NCFE) or by the subject teachers to fit around the content delivery.

Students are provided with individual examination timetables by email in advance of the relevant exam season. Students and parents are also able to view exam timetables on both the student and parent portals.

If a student has more than one external examination timetabled at the same time, the examinations team will arrange for them to be taken at an alternative time on the same day and advise the student of the new exam start times. This is likely to mean a student has to remain supervised and in isolation during the day and will be advised to bring food and drink for lunch periods spent under supervision. Students will be individually notified if they are affected. Students can revise between exams in isolation periods but this must be from hard copy notes.

Electronic communication/storage devices including mobile phones are not permitted in examination venues and disqualification is a risk if a student is found to be in possession of unauthorised items or materials. Students are also required to remove their watches prior to entering the examination rooms. Both analogue and digital clocks are provided in the majority of examination rooms.

For both external and internal examination days, students must wear their membership card in order to enter examination venues. Badges, pins and ribbons must be removed from the membership lanyard before entering the exam venue. Students are also expected to attend examinations with appropriate resources such as black pens, pencils, rulers and calculators if appropriate, as the college does not routinely provide this equipment. The resources required are listed on individual examination timetables issued to students prior to the examination events.

Students are advised to wear appropriate clothing when sitting an examination or external assessment as outerwear is not permitted unless there are exceptional circumstances such as extreme low temperatures.

Mock examinations and formal assessments

A level students will sit mock examinations in both years of study. Students studying GCSE English and mathematics will also sit mock examinations.

The majority of BTEC/CTEC subjects have an element of external assessment and the type and timing of assessment varies across the different subjects. Students studying BTECs/CTECs will be appropriately prepared for these external assessments and this may include a mock exam. This will be discussed with students by their subject teachers during induction.

The mock examinations are organised and delivered to a high level of rigour to mirror the summer external exam season. Students will have only one opportunity to sit mock exams during each mock event and an "X" grade will be used for any students who are absent from mock examinations. The aim is to provide students with a realistic experience of sitting exams to help them and their teachers to assess progress and plan improvements.

Examination study leave

Short periods of study leave are allocated to offer students the opportunity to prepare for external examinations. Study leave consists of one half day immediately prior to each examination, except in the case of a Monday morning exam. Study leave is not allocated for practical examinations.

Examination certificates and vocational coursework

The rising costs of postage have made it prohibitive for Blackpool Sixth to post examination certificates to students at the end of their studies. Students will receive communication as to the certificate collection process and the timeframe in which this will take place once they are received from the awarding body, usually during the Autumn term after a student has completed their programme of study at Blackpool Sixth. Email reminders are sent but the college can only retain the certificates for a limited period before the certificates are

destroyed. It is important to inform the college of changes to personal contact details so as students can be informed of when certificates are available for collection.

Overseas students can make a payment for certificates to be sent by recorded delivery to their home address once they are available. Students should contact the examinations office, via email on exams@blackpoolsixth.ac.uk, for further information.

Vocational and A level coursework will be retained in college when a programme of study is complete and cannot be released to students until late November after certification.

Any coursework that has not been collected by the end of the following January will be destroyed appropriately.

Examination and non-examination assessment appeals

Coursework/non-examination assessment (NEA) marks

Students will be informed of their coursework/NEA marks prior to them being submitted to the awarding bodies. Whilst the college is very confident in the robustness of its internal marking processes, it fulfils its duty to provide access to an internal appeals process. This internal service attracts a financial cost of £50 per appeal. More detailed information is made available to students when the NEA window is approaching relevant to their course.

Post Results Services

Awarding bodies provide students with opportunities to submit applications for enquiries about results (clerical checks and reviews of marking) and access to scripts (photocopies or originals). These external services are available for a short period from results release and attract a financial cost. More detailed information is available from the examinations office from the day results are published.

The college environment

Students have the benefit of first-class, specialist sixth form accommodation and facilities. We expect students to take care of their college and local environment. In particular, we ask students to observe restrictions regarding consumption of food and drink on carpeted areas and to place all litter in the appropriate bins provided.

The courtyard and other outside areas are available for students to relax and socialise. Any other activities taking place in the outside areas, such as ball games or large group activities, must be approved and risk assessed in advance by a member of staff.

Sustainability

The college is working hard to ensure it meets government targets for carbon emissions and all students are encouraged to consider the impact of their behaviours on the environment

and to take positive actions to help us achieve our targets. Please engage with the college "5 a day" campaign and other initiatives to help the environment.

College opening times

The college is open to students from 8am. You may use the FYI or other public areas of the college for private study prior to lessons starting or between lessons

After your last lesson the FYI is available for private study until 5pm (4.30 pm Friday). Those waiting for a bus or to be collected should wait in Cafe 6, Costa or Reception area.

The college closes to students at 5pm (4.30pm Friday)

Security

The safety of all students, staff and visitors to the college is a priority and students should remain vigilant and report any concerns to a member of staff. Only those that have a genuine reason to be at the college are allowed on campus and all visitors must sign in at reception and wear their ID lanyard/badge at all times. Any student found to have let an unauthorised person or persons onto the college campus will be subject to disciplinary action.

Bicycles, motorcycles and cars

Blackpool Sixth actively promotes sustainable travel alternatives, specifically public transport and cycling. The college is well served by public transport with bus stops directly outside the college. The Layton train station is a 15 minute walk away.

Students are encouraged to use bicycles as a means of transport to and from college. Covered, secure cycle racks are available at the rear of the site. The Tech service team will give rear gate access rights to those students cycling. Students are responsible for leaving bicycles securely locked and for their legal roadworthiness. Students are strongly advised to insure them and to register them with the police. Students must not leave their push bikes in other areas as these may be removed if they present a hazard to others.

For motorcyclists, 2 motorcycle bays are available. Motorcyclists must follow the same procedure for car drivers and register for a permit via the induction process, see below.

Limited car parking is available for students (around 100 spaces). To ensure the safety of everyone at college, limit congestion and to reduce the impact on our neighbours, students are encouraged to use alternative transport. Students in their first year at college are **not** permitted to drive to college until after the May half term break in their first year. Please note if first year students are found driving to college prior to May half term the college may refuse a permit request in the future. The procedure to obtain a permit described below must be followed.

For students wishing to drive to college, the college operates a permit scheme for parking and all vehicles must be registered with permits displayed at all times. To register for a permit students must complete an application form which is available on the student portal. Once an application is received students will be contacted to arrange an induction at which time their driving licence /pass certificate will be checked and students are also asked to show proof of insurance.

Students must ensure they obtain a permit prior to driving to college, in exceptional circumstances parking will be made available to students for a maximum of one week before the induction takes place however permission must be obtained from the estates department failure to comply may result in students having a permit request denied.

Please note: the college cannot accept responsibility for the theft, loss or damage of any bicycle, motorcycle or vehicle brought on to campus. Students are reminded that any accident on college grounds must be reported to the Estates department.

Catering facilities

High quality meals and snacks are available from The Store, Café Six, Relish. The Deli and Costa throughout the college day. There are also a number of coin operated vending machines around campus. All meals are freshly cooked on campus and are competitively priced.

Blackpool Sixth is committed to promoting healthy eating so a range of healthy, vegetarian and vegan options are available from all outlets. Special dietary requirements can be catered for if notice is given. Allergen information is available at each outlet.

Students can pay by cash, card or online. Students wishing to pay online can register for an online account at any time by talking to the Student Finance team.

Please note that all catering areas adopt a self-clear system and students are asked to clear away all their trays and packages as they leave.

Illegal substances (including alcohol)

Any students found consuming alcohol, or under the influence of alcohol, whilst at college will be subject to immediate suspension until the circumstances have been fully investigated. Parents/carers will be informed in accordance with the college's disciplinary procedures.

Any student found in possession of, or dealing in, illegal substances will be suspended pending an investigation, as a result of which the student's place at college may be withdrawn. The substance misuse policy is available on <https://blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/policies/>.

Smoking & vaping (e-cigarettes)

Blackpool Sixth is a smoke-free campus

The Blackpool Sixth Form College is committed to the health and wellbeing of all staff, students, visitors and contractors. We believe that everyone within our campus has the right to a smoke-free environment and that Blackpool Sixth is a safe and healthy learning and working environment. Blackpool Sixth is committed to eliminating the risks associated with tobacco smoke on campus, and to reduce the visibility and normalisation of smoking.

Smoking or being in possession of lit cigarettes is, therefore, not permitted within the boundaries of the campus, including car parks, buildings, paths, lawned areas, doorways and the pavement directly in front of the college.

Any student(s) smoking on campus or vaping outside the designated area will be reminded by a member of staff about our expectations. If this behaviour continues, despite the warning, disciplinary action will be taken in line with the college's positive behaviour and disciplinary policy.

E-cigarettes/vaping

Blackpool Sixth understands that using nicotine-containing products, such as vapes may be one way for those smokers who wish to cut down or quit. However, there is concern that e-cigarettes are seen as 'safe' but this is not the case, while the health risks of e-cigarettes are significantly lower than cigarettes they are not without risk.

In view of this, the use of e-cigarettes is not permitted in college buildings nor on the college site, except in the designated vaping area.

The college will take regular opportunities to raise awareness of the legislation and potential risks associated with vaping to staff, students and parents/carers.

Our smoke-free campus and approach to vaping aims to support members of the college who wish to give up smoking. Anyone who wants to quit smoking or vaping is advised to access expert help from the local stop smoking service:

- [NHS stop smoking services](#)
- [Smokefree Blackpool](#)
- [SmokeFree Lancashire](#)
- [Lancashire Quit Squad](#)
- [NHS Smoking Helpline on 0300 123 104](#)

Dress to college

Blackpool Sixth is a community of staff and students who work and study together within an atmosphere of mutual respect. Students are free to dress as they please but they should fit in with the college's high standards and expectations.

In line with our core value of respect, students who wear clothing which could cause offence to others (e.g. clothes that are too revealing or display offensive slogans or images) will be asked to cover the item of clothing up or will be sent home to change.

Students are expected to remove coats, hoods and hats when entering a classroom, learning space, exam room or meeting. Reasonable adjustments will be made, where relevant.

For security purposes, it is important that all members of the college are clearly identifiable. Blackpool Sixth, therefore, requires all staff and students to wear their membership card while on the premises and while representing college offsite.

Compliments, concerns and complaints

We want all students to be very happy at Blackpool Sixth; it is a very pleasant and friendly environment in which to learn. If you have a concern or complaint then please follow the procedure below. Please do not use social media to air a grievance as this does not give us an opportunity to respond.

A concern or complaint should be raised in the first instance with the person or area concerned as soon as possible and not later than within five working days of the incident. This may be a student's teacher or other member of staff. The member of staff dealing with a concern or complaint will make every reasonable effort to resolve it promptly at the local level as soon as possible or at least within five working days.

If the concern or complaint cannot be resolved, a formal complaint in writing should be made to the Deputy Principal. The college will respond within two working days to indicate that an investigation is being undertaken and aim to conclude an investigation and respond within ten working days of receiving a formal complaint.

Compliments may be received verbally or in writing and may be received directly by the individual in receipt of the praise or by a direct line manager. College staff will seek to share compliments in a genuine and generous manner.

The college's compliments policy and our concerns and complaints policy are available on <https://blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/policies/>.

Disciplinary procedures

Blackpool Sixth expects all members of the college to:

- act according to the core values and expectations
- be challenged if students or staff fail to meet the core values and expectations

Repeated failure to meet the values and expectations or serious breaches may result in disciplinary action. Disciplinary action is occasionally necessary in cases of poor attendance at lessons, failure to complete and submit work, failure to meet coursework deadlines, inappropriate behaviour etc. The aim of the disciplinary process is to help students to improve their performance and prepare for the world of work.

Staff will always aim to resolve any concerns at an early stage, informally, through early intervention and support. However, there are times when formal disciplinary action will be necessary. Normally the disciplinary action will be escalated in the order set out below.

- First formal warning
- Second formal warning
- Final warning
- Review of college place meeting

The outcome of a review of college place meeting may be that a student's college place is withdrawn. Some offences (e.g alleged gross/serious misconduct) may move directly to a review of college place meeting.

The full positive behaviour policy and disciplinary procedures are available on <https://blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/policies/>.

Other policies operated by the Directors (Governing Body)

In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Blackpool Sixth issues a publication scheme. The scheme is a document where we declare which pieces of college-related information we publish or intend to publish in due course. This is available on <https://blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/policies/>.

Charges to students for college activities

The following is the Statement of the Charging and Remissions Policy of the Governing Body of The Blackpool Sixth Form College as detailed in the financial procedures of the college.

The Directors, the Principal and the staff believe that the education of our students is much enhanced by the many opportunities which are offered for activities and excursions out of college, although they may not always be an essential part of any course. The Directors are

most grateful to the staff who organise such activities and recognise that appropriate charges to students who choose to participate must be made.

Charges must also be made for certain aspects of some subject courses, so that the level of government funding does not limit opportunities for students. Although the Directors believe that parents/carers will support this policy, they must draw parents/carers' attention to these details to avoid misunderstandings.

Students experiencing financial hardship may be able to claim financial support to cover some of the charges listed below. For further information about the financial support available and the application process, please go to <https://www.blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/student-support/financial-support/>

Membership card

Students are issued with a free membership card and lanyard at the start of term. Students must pay a £2 fee for a replacement for a lost membership card and lanyard. Students who persistently forget or lose their membership card may be required to pay a £10 deposit for a replacement card and lanyard, the deposit is refundable once the membership card or lanyard has been returned.

Lockers

A limited number of lockers are available for a hiring fee of £20 for one year plus a £10 deposit, which is refundable on return of the lock. Payments are made at the Student Finance Office and combination locks are issued at the Estates Office.

Files, paper and pens

Students are expected to provide their own stationery. Paper, pens, files etc. can be purchased from the Blackpool Sixth print room/shop (Refill) located in the Brock building.

Printing and photocopying

Photocopying is available in the print room/shop (Refill) at a cost of 5p per A4 side and 10p per A3 side. Colour photocopying is available at a cost of 10p per A4 and 20p per A3 side. Scan to email is also available at no charge.

All students will receive a computer printing quota worth £15, allocated in three instalments of £5 (one per term). Printing will be charged at 3p per sheet for black and white A4 printing, 5p for double-sided A4 printing, 20p per side for A4 colour laser printouts and 40p per side for A3 colour laser printing. Students who use up their entire quota, in any one term, will need to buy extra credit – printing credits can be purchased from Refill.

Students taking designated art subjects (graphics, photography or BTEC fashion or art) that require significant amounts of colour printing, will receive an additional allowance at key points in the year where coursework demands are high.

Please note that these limits are imposed as part of our sustainability policy to help reduce our carbon footprint. The allowance is calculated to cover the typical demands of

coursework, homework and other course-imposed printing. It may be that students taking specific combinations of subjects exceed this allowance. In such instances, students may need to buy additional credit. Students experiencing financial hardship may make an application for support from the Access Fund.

Students are able to make use of services in the print room, which is known as Refill. Here, high quality photo printing is available, along with while-you-wait photocopying so that students and staff are able to have their smaller copying and print jobs completed whilst they wait at the desk.

The cost for glossy printing is £2 for A3 glossy and matte photo prints, £1 for A4 glossy, matte, acetate and transfer paper photo prints, 40p for glossy prints and 30p for 6×4 glossy prints.

Glossy printing facilities are available in the Visual Arts department.

Refill offers a stationery shop where students are able to purchase any stationery that they may require for their studies. Art, textiles and media supplies are also available as well as a laminating and binding service for final coursework. Refill offers very low cost quality items and is usually a far cheaper alternative to purchasing stationery and other supplies elsewhere.

Refill is open 5 days a week from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Enrichment activities (6Advance)

Some of these activities involve external commercial organisations and so a charge has to be made to students. Such charges are clearly publicised in advance and there are always other, non-chargeable options available at every stage of the year.

Educational visits

Several departments organise excursions out of college to supplement and enhance the teaching and learning carried out in the subject. The cost of travel is shared equally by all participating students and is often subsidised. Most of these visits do not involve overnight accommodation, but, for those residential visits that do, an additional charge is made to students for this. Students who have difficulty in meeting the expenses incurred for essential educational visits should talk to a member of the Student Finance team, based in The Link.

Theatre visits

Visits to theatres are organised regularly. These are usually evening performances and participation is open to all students. In the case of productions of set texts, students studying these are strongly advised to attend. Participating students pay the cost of their theatre seats, generally at a discounted rate, and an equal share in the cost of travel.

FYi (Learning Resource Centre)

Books can be renewed twice before they must be returned. Failure to return books on time will mean subsequent borrowing of resources (e.g. laptops, books, DVDs), will not be allowed until all the books are returned.

Application fees for higher education (UCAS)

UCAS (University and Colleges Admissions Service) makes a charge for participation in the scheme and the student pays this at the time of application. The cost is £27.50 for up to 5 choices.

Interviews and open days for higher education and employment

In the case of visits to Open Days which are specifically organised by college, all participating students share the cost of the travel equally and this may be subsidised. Students who choose to attend other Open Days or interviews under their own arrangements must meet all the expenses involved. Students who have difficulty in meeting the expense incurred should talk to a member of the Student Finance team, based in The Link.

Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS)

Students undertaking work placement with young children or vulnerable adults will need a DBS check to go out on a work placement. The cost of the DBS check is currently £38. Payment is made when students bring in the completed DBS form and evidence of identity to the Head of Learning Resources and Careers. Students facing financial hardship may apply for funding from the Access Fund to help with the cost of this. Please talk to a member of staff in the Student Finance Office.

College property

Students may be charged for any loss or damage caused, whether deliberately or accidentally, to any textbook, laptop, tablet or other equipment/property belonging to Blackpool Sixth or to the fabric of the building itself. The amount levied will be either the full cost of replacement or repair, current at the time of the incident, or an appropriate amount, at the discretion of the Assistant Principal (Business Support).

Wilful damage to Blackpool Sixth property would be deemed gross misconduct and may result in permanent exclusion and, if appropriate, a formal prosecution.

Technology for learning - bring your own device

We ask all students to bring a laptop or tablet to their lessons. Blending traditional learning with modern ways of working ensures students leave college with both qualifications and the skills to thrive in the world of higher education and employment.

All students will be granted access to our online learning platforms which include the tools they need to complete much of their work digitally and unlimited cloud-based storage for all their files.

We actively encourage students bringing their own laptop or tablet but please be aware of the following key advice:

- Students **must be able to use and/or install** (free and secure) software on their device and access wifi settings.
- Students must have **appropriate free space** on the device to store and create work for class (remember - we provide **unlimited** cloud-based storage, so that doesn't need to be a lot)
- The device should have a screen size of a **minimum of 7"** - tablet devices should be paired with a keyboard case.
- Some low cost tablets (e.g. some Kindle Fire devices) or older laptop browsers may be incompatible with certain apps we require students to use. (in particular the 'Google Apps Suite' - Google Drive, Docs, Classroom, Slides, Sheets.)
- We **don't include phones as appropriate devices**.
- **Please note:** the college cannot accept responsibility for the theft, loss or damage of any devices brought on to campus. We **highly recommend** devices are covered by insurance.

Further details of the 'Technology Ready Scheme' [can be found via this link](#). You can also find an enquiry form for any question you may have or advice you may need.

What if I don't have my own device? Do I need a particular kind of device?

We strongly advise that any new devices are purchased after enrolment to college is confirmed and final course choices are made.

We are happy for students to provide any compatible device (see above) and emphasise that for most courses, there is little or no benefit to be had from providing an expensive high end machine.

Many current students (and staff) use Chromebooks which (at the time of writing) can be purchased new from around £179 meaning the cost of a laptop could be as little as 25p a day for the duration of a 2 year course.

Please note that a very small number of specialist applications are incompatible with Chromebooks. If this is a concern, please discuss with subject teachers at enrolment and be assured that where specialist software is required as part of a student's programme of study, the college provides machines and access in both the relevant classrooms and the learning resource centre during study periods. Many subjects benefit from access to a virtual PC via web browser to access software such as Adobe photoshop. For a full list of software available via our virtual PC platform, please click [here](#).

What if you are concerned about providing a device?

We recognise that everyone has different circumstances and college is fully committed to ensuring *everyone* has access to the resources they need.

The information on our financial support page explains how we support students financially. We have a supply of laptops available for students who may be concerned about providing a device (or whether their current device is suitable for college) If you feel this might be a situation that applies to you, please [fill in the enquiry form linked here](#).

Students who apply and are eligible for financial support at college will be able to access a loan device as part of this financial support. We will endeavour to support any other students with providing a suitable device upon which to learn.