

Newsletter

Summer 2023



ESHER HE DAY 2023

PROGRESSION GUIDANCE

Students met representatives from more than 80 universities and colleges, and attended specialist talks, as part of our Higher Education (HE) Day.

HE Day is one of the highlights of our Progression Guidance calendar.

In March, the sports hall was transformed into a hive of opportunities where our 6.1 students could browse and talk to university ambassadors and their students about their next steps.

University Ambassadors from 16 universities also gave two talks for Esher students: 'How to Choose a University and a Course' and 'Life as a University Student'.



Students benefitted from a workshop on how to use Unifrog, an online one-stop-shop for information related to university and apprenticeship destinations.

Nicola Wilberforce, Head of Progression Guidance at Esher says, "At a time when UCAS, the University and Colleges Admissions Service, is predicting a 30% increase in applications by 2030, events like the Esher HE Day are key to helping us promote the full range of choices available to our students.



"This year at Esher we sent off a record 922 UCAS applications. One of the reasons for this increase is that we continue to support former students who may have taken a gap year (or two) before applying. This year, we helped more than 200 former students with their applications."

Currently around 85% of our students go onto higher education, with the top five university destinations for our 2022 leavers being the University of Sussex, Loughborough University, Bournemouth University, University of Leeds and University of Exeter.



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& much more!

Letter from the Principal



Dear Parents and Carers, Students and Friends

You will receive this newsletter as our 6.2 students are under-taking a range of external examinations. It is important to remember, that this is the first summer in four years where examinations will not be affected by COVID-19 related disruption or with any mitigations in place. Our 6.2 students did not take external GCSE examinations in 2021 and have shown tremendous resilience in their preparation for their final assessments over the last two academic years at the College. The efforts of both teaching and support staff in running Formal Examinations for both our 6.1 and 6.2 students, can only help ensure that students are ready for their assessments and fulfil their academic potential. In addition, our BTEC students will be reaching the conclusion of their courses, completing final internal and external assessments. We wish all our students the very best with their summer examinations and we hope that they achieve the results they deserve.

Following the success of Higher Education Day in March, our Progression Guidance calendar continues apace. At the beginning of June, our 6.1 students will have the opportunity to access work experience or book onto our award-

winning 'Internship 2023' online programme, run in partnership with 8billionideas. Tickets for The Internship 2023 are available to buy on the College Portal until Friday 2 June. On Tuesday 27 June, we have our **After Esher Day** when students undertake a programme to progress with their higher education, employment, or apprenticeship applications. The final week of the Summer Term is **Wider Skills Week**, which sees a huge range of onsite, day trip and residential activities which aim to develop a broader set of skills.

Please do take a moment to explore our new College website. Launched at Easter, the new website is an excellent resource for prospective, current, and past students, parents and carers, with all the latest College information, guidance, and news in one place.

Last term, we said goodbye to Helen Odhams as Deputy Principal. After seven years at Esher, Helen has now moved on to be the new Principal and Chief Executive at Brockenhurst College. Helen has contributed hugely to the continued success of the College, and we wish her all the best in her new role. Following a competitive recruitment process, Sagar Patel has been appointed Deputy Principal and you can find out more

about him on Page 11 of this newsletter. Sagar's new role led to Kate Parsons promotion to Assistant Principal (Student Services). Kate has been at the College for 10 years as a Teacher of Psychology; Tutor Team Leader; Director of Safeguarding and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and will bring much experience and expertise to the role.

Finally, I must make my regular mention of the Esher College Africa Trust (ECAT), the official Esher Sixth Form College charity. Any support you can give for the Dope School in rural Zimbabwe will be much appreciated. You can find out more and donate via the College website.

Wishing you all a great summer.

Dan Hards
Principal

D of E Gold Students Take On UK's Swollen Rivers

COMPLEMENTARY STUDIES

The wettest March in 40 years, wasn't going to stop our DofE Gold students who completed a three-day canoe trip for their practice expedition over Easter.

After months of studying maps and preparing route cards for a four-day canoe trip down the River Thames, our DofE cohort were faced with the wettest March since 1981. With both the Thames and the River Wey flooded and deemed unsafe to canoe just days before they were due to start, the group had to find a third back up plan and settled on the Basingstoke Canal as their chosen waterway.

The students arrived at the village of Mytchett on the banks of the canal early on Saturday morning. Despite all the last-minute changes, they set off with big smiles - squeezing all their camping gear, food and clothes into the canoes. After paddling 17km they loaded up the minibuses and headed for our campsite on top of a hill in the middle of Guildford. They quickly got the tents up and the pasta boiling for their dinner.

The sun came out for Day 2, helping the students paddle through their longest day. They started with the crystal clear

spring waters at Greywell Tunnel (home to approximately 15,000 bats) and several stopped for lunch at Odiham Castle (built for King John in 1207). There was plenty of wildlife to spot along the way too. After supper, the students bedded down early chatting quietly in their tents and not missing their phones too much.

Monday dawned with a sparkly frost, so the happy campers breakfasted on porridge and were keen to complete their final day on the canal. Like the pro teams they were becoming, they expertly arranged their gear in the canoes and paddled off into the sunshine. At the end of the day, they had to wash the canoes and take responsibility for the tents and stoves which needed to be washed and dried. Easter eggs were handed out and they headed home a little tired. When asked about the trip Mia said it was a blast, Lucy agreed saying despite the cold it was fun.

Thanks to all the staff who braved the mud and last-minute route - Katherine Wright, Lee Bone, Stephen Andrews, Emma Cheney, and Wendy Davies. The staff were impressed with the positive attitude the students had to all the changes, and how their good humour and

kindness to each other shone through. We look forward to going out with this lovely team (and some warmer weather) to make the final expedition on the River Wye in mid Wales later this term a great success.



** SIGN UP FOR DofE GOLD

Did you know, 6.1 students can still join our DofE Gold Programme to take part in a final expedition for Summer 2024. You don't need to have done DofE Bronze or Silver to sign up, email Katherine Wright at KWright@esher.ac.uk to find out more.

Chemistry

Chemistry wins in Gold, Silver and Copper

Many congratulations to our A Level Chemists who competed with nearly 12,000 students from 950 schools in this year's Chemistry Olympiad competition.

Run by the Royal Society of Chemistry, the competition is designed to challenge and inspire, and provide a unique opportunity for students to push themselves further and excel in the chemistry field. It helps students to develop critical problem-solving skills, learn to think more creatively, and gives them a chance to test their knowledge in new, real-world situations.

This year the topics ranged from rocket fuels, electronegativity, amino acid complexes, vaping and cheese - requiring students to apply their knowledge beyond the specification.

Congratulations to Oscar Sharpe who achieved the Gold Award; Silver Awards went to Maria Barth, Max Nicholson, Oliver Byworth, Sophie Kirkby-Toms and Amy Roberts; And Copper Awards to Annica Baldock.

Seema Madan, Head of Chemistry



Chemistry in Action

Students enjoyed an amazing day of chemistry, with five sessions from leading chemists in academia and industry, at the Emmanuel Centre in London.

"The Chemistry In Action event took place on March 15. It was an interesting event with many interesting speakers. One of the speeches was about how heroin and some over the counter pain killers are isomers of each other and are made in the same reaction. This showed us how important diligent work is in chemistry and how there can be many advantages and disadvantages of using chemistry in medicine.

There was a very enjoyable interactive talk about how chemistry is used in criminology so that we can find the cause of death and even how far a gun was fired from to kill a victim. It was very useful and has helped me to see all the routes that I can take with my studies. I particularly enjoyed the talk on how chemicals have been used in war throughout history, and how some of the greatest chemical discoveries have been used in violence. Overall, it was a very positive experience that helped us to see how we can use our chemistry in many different aspects of life and how it is a vital subject, which helps shape the world."

Hassen Saleh-Matter, 6.1 Student

PHYSICS

STEM Skills Challenge

After a hiatus of several years due to the pandemic, Esher Sixth Form College entered a team into the Surrey Satro Problem Solving Challenge 2023.

Run by the education charity, SATRO, the challenge involves the use of ingenuity, teamwork and creativity based on STEM skills to find a solution to a desktop engineering problem.

Team Esher consisted of four 6.1 Physics A Level students; Ema Maciute, Nicole Elliott, Theodora Dogaru and Xavier Goraieb-Seaborn.

This year's challenge, "Cleaning The Oceans", was inspired by one of the UN's sustainable development goals of Life Below Water. In 2021, over 17 million tonnes of plastic entered our oceans and this is predicted to double (or even triple) by 2040.

The challenge set for the students was to design and build a device to move as many Lego Bricks from a water filled container in one minute.

As much as possible, the materials supplied were recycled. To encourage the students to consider sustainability in their design, they could gain extra points if they did not use all the materials supplied.



Although our team did not score highly enough to progress to the final this year, they did score one of the highest marks for their design!

In addition to showcasing their problem-solving skills, they also had the opportunity to demonstrate they could work under pressure as part of a team, all of which are key skills the admission tutors are looking out for when deciding places on engineering courses.

**Sue Lawton
Teacher of Physics**



Model United Nations at the London School of Economics

6.1 COMPLEMENTARY STUDIES

After two years of online conferences, Esher Sixth Form College was delighted to send a delegation of first year students to the annual LSESU Youth Model United Nations.

Report by student, Olivia Fay.

Model United Nations (MUN) was not the experience any of us expected when signing up for an extracurricular activity. From collating tangled news stories found on Google to genuinely finding a love in debating and researching global issues, it has been a great experience.

In March, 12 of us took the unique opportunity to take part in LSE's prestigious Youth Model United Nations Conference for three consecutive days. To prepare, we had to do extensive research into the committee and country assigned to us and get ourselves ready to conduct intense debate with other students from all over the country (and Europe). Though daunting at first, we all had an incredible time, made new friends, and learned some amazing skills as diplomats.

I represented the delegation of Brazil in the UN Security Council alongside Russia (represented by Jasmine Clifton, pictured above), which was an interesting experience considering we were facing the topic of cyber warfare with many skillful and very vocal delegates in our committee. This included lots of discussions surrounding sovereignty, self-defence, sanctions, and drones. The three days were full of enthusiastic debate, bargaining and compromise but after throwing out multiple working papers and draft resolutions we finally got to a consensus and passed a resolution that was thankfully not vetoed. Our chairs helped to guide and support us throughout, leaving us with a very enjoyable first MUN experience in an advanced committee.

While getting to grips with our committees (Esher students were involved in six altogether), Seb Wickenden and Jake Heavens were facing a different type of challenge in the Crisis Committee where they had to try and tackle a 2nd Falkland's War taking place in 2026. Their research was quite different to the other committees, being assigned the role of an individual within one of two cabinets, Argentina or the UK. As the Argentine cabinet moved effectively and swiftly to secure their hold on the Falkland Islands, the British seemed pre-occupied with assassinating the leader of the SNP and killing penguins. Then the Argentines were undermined by a dissident power-hungry faction within its cabinet, which launched a destructive coup d'état, hospitalising the president and starting a civil war. Unfortunately, Seb was assassinated in the wake of the chaos. (Don't worry, he was in lessons the day after).

It was such a fun experience. We all could not recommend it more. Congratulations to the Esher Students who picked up five Special Awards at the Closing Ceremony. They were:

- Jack Desmond won the Diplomacy Award in the African Union (the top award on that committee)
- Seb Wickenden received an Honourable Mention in the Crisis Committee
- Gwyn Horne received an Honourable Mention in ASEAN
- Jasmine Clifton won the Most Improved Award in the UNSC
- Oscar Bates won the Research Award in the African Union



EPQ Projects Shortlisted for AoC Awards

Congratulations to Isabelle Thieme and Jamie Knowles, for reaching the finals of the AoC Info AGA Student Research Awards.

Both students had their EPQ projects shortlisted. Isabelle's project explored to what extent ancient classical portrayal of women influenced contemporary presentations of women in literature. Jamie chose to research to what extent genetics and selective breeding has changed the horse racing industry.

Emma Cheney, Teacher of Biology and our EPQ co-ordinator, said, "Each year we have around 300 students that decide to complete an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). EPQ is a fantastic way to explore an area of interest in depth and facilitates the development of a wide range of valuable skills for university or the workplace. We are always amazed at the wide range of amazing projects that students undertake each year. This year the Association of Colleges

(AoC) worked with the exam board, AQA, to launch a new award for student research projects. We put forward six of our highest scoring projects and two of our students, Isabelle Thieme and Jamie Knowles, were shortlisted for the award. Whilst they did not quite clinch the final award, it was an amazing achievement to be shortlisted."

Isabelle, studied Classical Civilisation, English literature and Psychology A Level at Esher, and is now at Bristol University studying Classical Studies.

Jamie, who studied Biology, Chemistry and Economics, is now on a gap year hoping to study Veterinary Medicine and Science at The University of Edinburgh.

Highest Mark in the UK for Geography A Level

Congratulations to Pasha Taylor for achieving the highest A Level Geography exam mark for Edexcel Geography in the 2022 exams.



In recognition of Pasha's achievements, she received an Excellence Award from the Royal Geographical Society with IBG. Pasha, who is now at Cambridge University studying Geography, said, "At Esher I found a real interest in the Geography, Maths, and Biology A Level courses I had chosen. Geography drew me in, with highly relevant modules on 'Superpowers' and 'Health and Human Rights', which coincided with the beginning of the war in Ukraine.

"It is an honour to have achieved the RGS Excellence Award. I believe my approach to revision enabled this accomplishment as I was very thorough with covering key points of each possible topic that could come up in the exam and ensuring that I had at least one example or piece of evidence to support them. I also used the advanced information to form countless practice questions and drafted responses to each.

"I started at Cambridge in October 2022, and, so far, I have really enjoyed my time here. The teaching style is very personal, with regular supervision sessions with two other students and an academic specialist. I had never considered applying to Oxbridge before going to Esher, although the High Achievers sessions opened my eyes to the idea. Helen Humphreys, Head of Geography at Esher, in particular supported me throughout my application, and I am very grateful to her."

Helen added, "Both Pasha's Geography teacher, Alex Ridsen, and the Geography department are truly delighted at Pasha's achievement. Her hard work, dedication and keen interest in the subject will stand her in excellent stead as an undergraduate at Cambridge!"

6.2 PROGRESSION PATHWAY

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Oxbridge at Esher

Esher students interested in applying to Oxford or Cambridge are offered a range of support right from the beginning of their start here.

Not only are they encouraged to apply for summer schools, attend webinars, and enter competitions set by the two universities, they are also provided with a comprehensive summer term package of support on their application. Once their application is submitted, staff work alongside students to prepare them for their assessments, and the interview process, including an interview bootcamp experience with Reigate College students just before the Oxbridge interviews begin in December.

This year during the autumn term, some 6.1 students had the chance to visit St Hilda's College in Oxford and get a taste of life as an undergraduate.

Recently in April, staff and students were delighted to welcome Dr Rachel Hindmarsh and Natalie Abbot, outreach officers from St Hilda's College Oxford and Churchill College Cambridge, to Esher on their Oxbridge Surrey roadshow.

Any student interested in applying to Oxford or Cambridge in the autumn was invited to attend to hear about the application process and what these two prestigious universities have to offer. The visitors gave a comprehensive overview of life at the universities and fielded a range of questions from students about applying and studying there.



Clothes Swap, Litter Picks And Bird Feeders

GREEN WEEK

In March, the College held its annual Green Week to promote sustainability with a series of events.

The Student Union held a very successful Clothes Swap in the Café. Thank you to everyone who donated items of clothing and the Fashion and Textiles department for lending their rails and hangers. All the items were snapped up very quickly and raised £40 for ECAT in the process, with the SU hoping to run similar events in the future.

Members of the Student Environmental Committee, led by Daniel Poncia, the College's Eco and Sustainability Executive, were also active, doing Litter Picks around Weston Green as well as planting wildflower seeds to develop meadow areas around the College allotments. Daniel and his team produced excellent resources exploring the impact of different foods on our environment, which were presented to all students in tutor groups, creating lively debate as to the impact of our decisions on the environment.

While students who take Saving The Planet With Science, led by Ailis Kane, as their complementary study option, made bug hotels, bird feeders and monitored the biodiversity on campus with camera traps (and some good old-fashioned binoculars) to see how many bird species they could attract.

We continue to be expanding the provision of recycling facilities across the campus, with many new recycling bins being added. Students can now recycle stationery including pens and pencils in the library too!



ESHER SUMMER FESTIVAL '23

12:30-4 PM ON FRIDAY 7TH JULY

FOOD STALLS

DODGEMS, TWISTER, SPINBALL!

LIVE MUSIC!

£7 A TICKET FOR UNLIMITED RIDES (BUY YOUR TICKET FROM THE PORTAL SHOP)

£8 ON THE DAY

ALL PROCEEDS TO ECAT!

ECAT
Esher College Africa Trust



Entry In September 2023

What happens next for our Year 11 applicants

Between now and September, when you start at Esher Sixth Form College, there are two key admission events for your diary:

1) Introduction Day (June 29 and June 30)

After your GCSEs finish, you will receive an email in June inviting you into the College for one of two Introduction Days to experience taster lessons in all your preferred subjects.

2) Enrolment (August 29 -31)

Once you have your GCSE results, you will be invited into the College the following week for one of three days to finalise your study programme and enrol you into the College.

So, what happens at Introduction Day and Enrolment?

Introduction Days

Our Introduction Days run from 8:55am-3pm, and are a great opportunity to experience College life. You will be put into a temporary 'tutor group' for a day and given a taster timetable, based on your proposed study programme. There is also the chance to take a 'free choice' session, to try out a subject if there is a course you are undecided about.

Will my friends be invited to the same day?

All applicants who attend the same school as you, will also be invited to attend the same day. We work with as many of our feeder schools as possible to avoid prom and any leaver day events.

How do I change my course?

There will be Help Clinics throughout the day where you can talk to a specialist teacher about changes to your proposed study programme.

I haven't had my interview yet?

Please go to the Learning Resource Centre 1 after your final tutor session. You will complete your interview with a member of staff, who will update your course choices.

What do I do about lunch?

There will be a lunch break where you can purchase a selection of food and drinks from our café and Costa Coffee concessions. Vegan and Vegetarian options will be available. We take cash and card payments. Or you are welcome to bring a packed lunch. For students who are worried they don't know anyone, our study centre will be open to offer a quiet space for you to hang out and chat to some of our student ambassadors.



What do I need to bring?

Please come prepared for the day with a note pad, pen, and water bottle. There will be student ambassadors and staff on hand to help you find your way around the campus.

What do I wear?

At Esher, there is no uniform and no strict rules on what you are allowed to wear. However, you will be joining an adult learning community, based on mutual respect and tolerance, and we expect students to dress appropriately for a learning environment.

Do my parents/carers come with me?

Introduction Day is for applicants only. We have lots of friendly student ambassadors (who were in the same situation a year ago), ready to help you find your way around.

Enrolment

Enrolment this year will run for three days from Tuesday 29 August through to Thursday 31 August. You will receive an email in July, about which enrolment day you should attend. On the day, our student ambassadors will be here to guide you into the Sports Hall, where you will agree your study programme with a member of teaching staff (most likely a teacher in one of the subjects you want to study). If there are no changes, the interview takes 15-30 minutes.

What do I need to bring?

Aside from your official exam result slips and a copy of your enrolment invite, you do not need to bring anything else with you.

Can I bring my parent/carer with me?

The choice is yours! Most students attend their interview alone, whilst some are accompanied by a parent/carer.

What do I do if I can't make the enrolment day?

Attendance is crucial as Enrolment forms the basis for a successful start to your college career. In exceptional circumstances only, it may be possible to make alternative arrangements. If this is the case, it is essential that you contact the Admissions team at the College, prior to your enrolment appointment. It is important that you are contactable on your enrolment day, wherever you may be.



Raab On Rwanda And Freedom Of Speech

Last term, Politics students had the pleasure of hosting Dominic Raab, MP for Esher and Walton, for a lively Q&A session.

In recent years, Raab has faced much public scrutiny for a range of issues, including his views on feminism, poverty, and deportation to Rwanda, as well as more recently being accused of bullying his staff. When Raab came in, he was open and willing to face some of the most probing of questions, for which Esher students have become known for. We were glad to welcome him in to face scrutiny, which he himself thinks is fundamental for protecting freedom of speech.

Following an introduction from one of his constituents - 6.2 Politics A Level student Sky - Raab introduced himself and his parliamentary career. Most recently, he has been the Foreign Secretary, the Deputy Prime Minister, and the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice.

To begin his talk, Raab mentioned the 'harm principle' and the role it should play on freedom of speech. Raab argues that free speech should always be allowed unless it comes at the expense of, or harms, others. After continued questioning on the topic, he maintained that people should all learn to listen to the views of others, as it is important to debate - although within the boundaries of mutual tolerance and respect.

Raab faced significant questioning on where the boundary should be drawn between hate speech, with statistics demonstrating a significant rise in the number of hate crimes reported to the police. Raab suggested that the rise in reported hate crimes was due to an increase in public confidence in the police. He shared his view that people are driven to extremist politics by not being able to openly share their opinions, emphasising the importance of free speech.

"My message to you about mutual tolerance, is to listen to the other side and test your own argument," Raab stated. He argued that although we need clear boundaries on free speech (current



legislation criminalises racial and religious hatred), it is important to note that discourse is not illegal, and that the space for scrutiny and freedom of speech should always be protected.

Raab faced questions from students on a range of issues, including what Conservatism meant to him and why he subscribed to it. To Raab, Conservatism holds a range of views that he believes in - some examples he cited as the most important of these were the values and benefits of free enterprise, liberty and free speech, social mobility, and equality of opportunity.

He was also asked about the recent Nationality And Borders Act, which planned to relocate asylum seekers to Rwanda in efforts to deter people arriving in the UK through illegal and dangerous routes. Raab argued that although he wishes for our country to be freer and more open, he is against the unlawful and risky routes, and is in favour of collaborating with the UN to create safer paths for migrants. The contentious issue of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict also arose, and Raab concluded that it was "not a one-sided story".

Despite mixed responses to his visit, it's fantastic to be able to welcome politicians to the College to face scrutiny, especially from future constituents, as this helps engagement of often underrepresented youth in the political system.

Ella Orrow-Whiting & Nicholas Bransby
6.2 Politics Students

The Munira Wilson Report

Politics students, Kitty Gomes and Annabelle Seeley, give their verdict on a recent visit by the Liberal Democrat MP for Twickenham and Richmond, Munira Wilson.

An MP since 2019, Munira's Q&A session started off strong, demonstrating that questioning your representative can prove to be a powerful source of scrutiny. The first question was about a recent appearance on a BBC politics show, where she seemed to suggest that she supported the use of the army in breaking up strikes. Munira was quick to admit that she misspoke in the interview and that what she meant to say was that logistically the army should be involved in the discussions over what to do about the mass striking.

Some answers however, warranted a far simpler answer. When asked by a student what her view was on MP's having a second job is, she plainly said they shouldn't. What followed was not as simple, with a number of students pointing out the fact that Ed Davey, the Leader of the Liberal Democrats, had been known to have a second job as an advisor for a law firm and financial investment company.

Munira remained vague when asked about her stance on potential Liberal Democrat coalitions in the future. Although she stressed that the party leader had ruled out another coalition with the Conservatives in a redo of the Cameron-Clegg government, she did not entirely reject the idea of co-operation with Labour.

When asked about her views on Rishi Sunak's plan to make all pupils study maths until they are 18, Munira was not entirely negative about the proposition. As the Education Spokesperson for the Lib



Dems, Munira made clear her distaste for the current education system in England, instead advocating for a wider baccalaureate system which does not specialise children as young as GCSE level.

Near the end of the talk, Munira detailed a very interesting campaign, which she is running in response

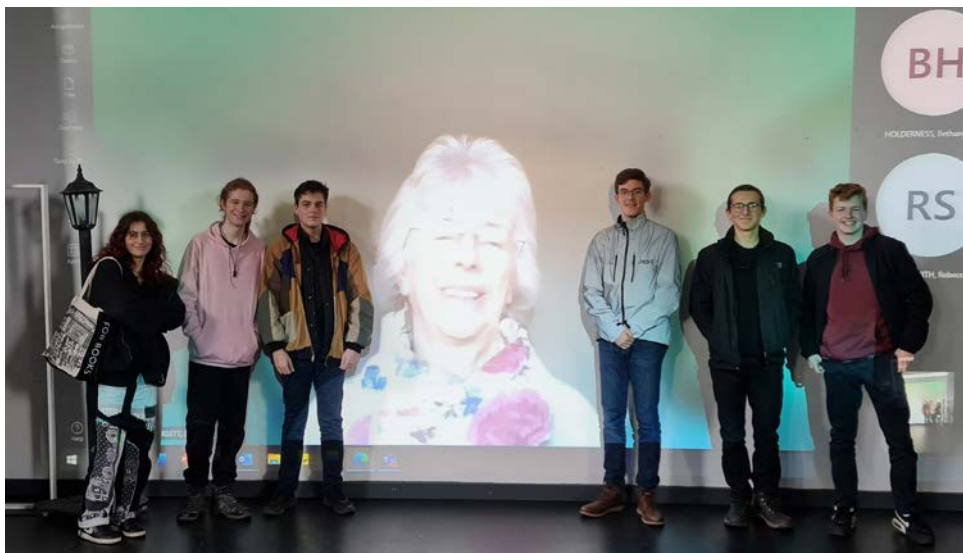
to a question about the housing crisis. In a push to stop public bodies from just selling their assets to the highest bidder, Munira is trying to appeal to the mayor to allow the plot of the Teddington Police Station to be made into a GP surgery, with affordable housing built above the clinic.

Overall, it was very interesting to hear an MP from outside the two main parties, give an insight into the future of politics in this unprecedented time. Something we see less often due to the two-party domination in the House of Commons.

By Kitty Gomes and Annabelle Seeley 6.2 students
Photographed either side of Munira Wilson

Baroness Lister Talk

As part of the Learn With The Lords programme, Politics students had the chance to hear from Baroness Lister of Burtersett about the role the House of Lords plays in UK Parliament. The online talk was held in College Theatre, and the Baroness spoke on topics as diverse as electoral reforms, public sector strikes, lowering the voting age to 16 and proposals for a democratically elected House of Lords.



Trip to the Supreme Court and National Theatre



6.1 Politics students enjoyed two trips in one day – a visit to the Supreme Courts' three courts and later, to the National Theatre to see Phaedra, a powerful play about the politics of interpersonal power politics.

On a rainy Thursday in March, a bizarre yet well dressed, contingent of Politics students headed into London to visit the UK Supreme Court. The aim of the trip was (hopefully) to enrich our political knowledge, but really so we could satiate our teenage egos, by sitting in the supreme justices' chairs and give completely unqualified decisions in mock trials.

Jokes aside, we began the trip by visiting the former Middlesex Guildhall, now the home of the Supreme Court, on Parliament Square. The building has housed the Judiciary following the 2005 Constitutional Reform Act, in which, the 'Law Lords' were moved across the green from Parliament into their own independent building. Housing three magnificent court rooms, we first went through to the largest, where we were given a small talk on the role of the judiciary through time, from magna carta, all the way up to modern day. After this, we were presented with a former case, and sat in a mock trial, with students being split up into defence, prosecution and justices.

What makes the Supreme Court particularly unique, is the presence of multiple justices presiding over every case, always in an odd number to avoid a split vote. Then followed a whistle stop tour through the last two courtrooms, each with a unique design. The first paid homage to the historic and future role of women in the

judiciary, and the second was the home of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (JCPC), which is the highest court of appeal for UK overseas territories as well as many crown dependencies.

After the tour ended, we were allowed some free time before we all met back up at the National Theatre, to watch Phaedra, a modern rendition of the Roman tragedy, about an Athenian Noblewoman's lust for her stepson. As a drama student, I cannot put into words the extent of how amazing this show was. From the inventive glass box set placed on top of the drum revolve, allowing the whole set to be rotated, to the sharp and powerful sound design, this play was truly the National Theatre at its best. It explored deeply political themes, the most potent being the human relationships between people of the imperial core and periphery, how it shapes the power dynamics and motivation behind them.

Thanks to the Politics Department for an entertaining and educational trip, we all had great fun!

By Sebastian Wickenden (they) 6.1 Student

Pictured outside the Supreme Court with Liam Gunning and Carl Egginton



A Blast From the Past - Actor Sophie Matthew

Joined Esher:	2011
Subjects:	Performing Arts, English Literature and Mathematics A Levels, Psychology AS Level.
Secondary School:	Claremont Fan Court

Sophie always knew she wanted to be an actor. The West End star says her time at Esher Sixth Form College helped her seal that dream. After taking Performing Arts at Esher, she went on to study Musical Theatre at the prestigious Mountview Academy of Performing Arts. She has since appeared in *Mamma Mia* (West End), *Our House* (UK Tour) and *Humans* (Channel 4).

What are you doing now?

I am a professional Actor, Casting Assistant and Teacher

Why did you choose a sixth form college?

Although I knew I wanted to go to drama school for my undergraduate training, I thought it was important to wait until I was 18, and make sure I got my A Levels, just in case I changed my mind. I also wanted to go somewhere with a diverse student cohort where I could meet new people.

What were your first impressions of Esher?

How many people there were! I had been to a relatively small school, so it was amazing to be surrounded by so many people.

What were your course highlights at Esher?

Performing Arts was always a highlight for me, as I met some of my best friends there and we used to have so much fun and such a laugh studying something that we were all very passionate about. I was fortunate enough to be involved in both College Productions, as well as the Edinburgh Fringe Festival play, which was a very special experience. I really loved some of the female writers I studied in AS Level English, and I am still a fan of their work now. Another major highlight was the four-day Matthew Bourne course I did, where two professional company members from Matthew Bourne's *New Adventure's* taught us choreography from *The Nutcracker*, which was a real game-changer for me in terms of wanting to work as a professional performer. I am forever grateful to Gail, Head of Performing Arts, for organising this.

How did your teachers inspire you?

The teachers at Esher were always unbelievably supportive and really pushed me to follow my passions. There was never a moment that any of them made me believe that things weren't achievable. It is so humbling to be able to return to the place that helped me at such an impressionable and vital age. I hope I can help inspire others to push themselves and aim high!

What was your career path after Esher?

I trained for three years on the BA (Hons) in Musical Theatre at Mountview Academy of Performing Arts, where I was fortunate enough to gain representation.



I went on to act professionally, as well as work as a Casting Assistant for Debbie O'Brien Casting, Hubbard Casting and others.

What career advice would you give?

It is a tough industry to be in, but you probably already know that. If it is the place you believe you are supposed to be, then go for it. It takes real dedication and some definite hurdles, but there is nothing else like standing on stage doing what you love. I would also say if you are unsure, look into working backstage/ behind the scenes, as there are some incredibly skilled and rewarding jobs there!

What has been your career highlight so far?

I performed as 'Sophie' in *Mamma Mia* when ABBA's own Björn Ulvæus was in the audience and met him afterwards, which was pretty mind blowing.

What advice would you give your 16-year-old self?

Try not to worry too much about what others around you are or aren't doing - everyone has their own paths, so work hard, enjoy yourself, and cherish your friendships.



Performing Arts Student Raise The Bar

The offers are still coming in, but Performing Arts BTEC students at Esher are following their dreams with offers to some of the top dance and drama schools in the country. Congratulations to Kit Riou, who is going to Arts Ed; Darcey-Dee Springer to Rambert dance company; Oliver D'Souza to Italia Conti; Lucia Marfé to Bird College and Louis Snelling, who has won a scholarship to UCLA to do gymnastics and sports science.

Meet the Teacher



Name: Sagar Patel

Position: Deputy Principal

When did you join Esher: 2023

This term, Sagar started his new role at Esher Sixth Form College as Deputy Principal, but his journey with Esher started much earlier in 2003 when he came here as a student.

1 What are your memories of Esher?

I went to Esher from 2003 to 2005, and before that I went to Esher High School. I had a fantastic time at the College, both academically and socially. My fondest memories stem from the time I had with my friends, who are still my closest friends now. Academically, I had a wonderful Economics teacher who sparked a love of the subject which led to me pursuing it at university. I also studied an amazing History course, called 'People, Power and Protest.' I was able to delve into topics such as the American Civil Rights movement and the fight for Indian independence. It was important to me to be able to see people who looked like me and who came from similar backgrounds in history books. I loved coming to College, as I got to spend every day with my best friends, studying topics in which I was really interested.

2 How did Esher prepare you for university?

The balance between being able to make my own choices and the support given to me at Esher was great preparation for university. It helped me become more independent in managing my time, which was essential at university. Also, being in an environment where I interacted with so many people from different backgrounds and schools to me meant I was much more confident socially when I went to university.

3 How did you get into teaching?

I came into teaching through a programme called Teach First, which meant I was paid whilst training and learning on the job.

4 What is the best piece of advice someone has ever given you?

My first job out of university was working on a trading floor in Singapore, and the advice I was given has always stuck with me:

"Don't make the same mistake twice. If something goes wrong, learn from it, reflect and hopefully don't make the same mistake again."

5 What made you want to go into teaching?

I feel very strongly that every single person, no matter their background, should have an equal opportunity to succeed and that is what led me into teaching. There are a vast number of challenges in the profession, but I still feel as I did when I started - it is a job in which you can make a big difference to a young person's life. I also love Economics!

6 What advice would you give your 17-year-old self?

Believe in yourself and always take the most interesting and challenging option rather than the easy one.



Parent Trustee Vacancy

There will be a vacancy for a parent representative on the College Board of Trustees from November 2023. Any parent of a current first year student, or prospective student for September 2023, may offer themselves for election. Parents serve for a term of two years, irrespective of how long their daughter or son remains at the College. We would encourage you to take this opportunity to become closely involved in the organisation of the College and, if you would like to informally discuss the duties and commitments of a Trustee, please contact Sharon Kelly (skelly@esher.ac.uk) at the College. If required, Sharon can send you a nomination form or put you in contact with an existing Trustee, so that you are able to gain an accurate picture of the commitment involved.

We will require completed nomination forms to be returned to the College by Monday 16 October 2023.

Dates for your Diary

ECAT

Please be aware dates published here may have to change.

Summer Term 2023

Monday 29 May to Friday 2 June	Half Term
Wednesday 7 June to Friday 9 June	6.1 The Internship Programme / Work Experience
Monday 23 June	A Level exams finish
Tuesday 27 June	6.1 After Esher Day
Tuesday 4 July	Inset
Friday 7 July	Esher Summer Festival
Friday 14 July	End of Term

Dates for Prospective Students and Parents/Carers (September 2023 admissions)

Tuesday 27 June	Introduction Evening (parents/carers)
Thursday 29 June	Introduction Day (students)
Friday 30 June	Introduction Day (students)

Autumn Term 2023

Tuesday 29 -Thursday 31 August	Enrolment for New Students
Monday 4 September	Start of 6.2 Day (selected students)
Wednesday 6 September	Your Start at Esher Induction for New Students
Thursday 7 September	Your Start at Esher Tutor Interview on Teams
Monday 11 September	First Day of Teaching for All Students
Monday 23 October to Friday 27 October	Half Term
Wednesday 20 December	End of Term

Dates for Prospective Students and Parents/Carers (September 2024 admissions)

Monday 3 July 2023	Open Evening, 4:30-8pm
Tuesday 4 July 2023	Online Admission Open
Friday 29 September 2023	Online Admissions Close 12noon

Social Media

 EsherSixthFormCollege  @EsherSFCCollege  EsherSixthFormCollege

Running for ECAT



Congratulations to Principal Dan Hards, who ran both the Brighton Half Marathon and the Kingston Half Marathon last term, to raise more than £300 for the Esher College Africa Trust (ECAT).

ECAT is a registered charity that supports the Dope School in rural Zimbabwe and raises money to help pay the school fees for children who are AIDS orphans. Despite challenging times in Zimbabwe, we are hoping to support 10 children this year with their school fees.

To find out more, or donate, visit www.esher.ac.uk/the-college/ecat

Adult Counselling, Coaching and Life Skills courses at Esher

Esher Sixth Form College has been running a successful life skills and counselling programme since 1992. We are currently offering four courses for September 2023. All courses are accredited and validated by the Counselling & Psychotherapy Central Awarding Body (CPCAB). CPCAB is the only Ofqual-approved awarding body specialising in counselling.

Level 2 Award in Effective Listening Skills
A two-day course 9am – 3pm (Saturday 14 October and Saturday 11 November 2023), to better understand and help improve your personal and working relationships.
PRICE: £208

Level 2 Award in Counselling Skills
A 30-week course on Thursday evenings, starting September 14, 2023 (6:30-8pm). Take the first step in training to be a counsellor. This course will not qualify candidates to become counselling practitioners but will prepare them for the

next level of practitioner training, and can provide credit as entry to other courses.
PRICE £939

Level 3 Certificate in Counselling Studies
Candidates must have achieved the Level 2 qualification in counselling, or a related subject or equivalent, to learn more about counselling theory and agency work. This is a 30-week course on Thursday evenings, starting September 14, 2023 (6:30-8pm)
PRICE: £958

Level 4 Diploma in Life Coaching Studies
Candidates must have achieved the Level 3 qualification in a related subject or complementary subject. This is a 35-week course on Thursday evenings, starting on October 5, 2023 (5.45-8.45pm). **PRICE £1934**

For more information on how to sign up, visit www.esher.ac.uk/courses/adult-education or call adult education on 020 8335 2544.

