



WATLING
— ACADEMY —

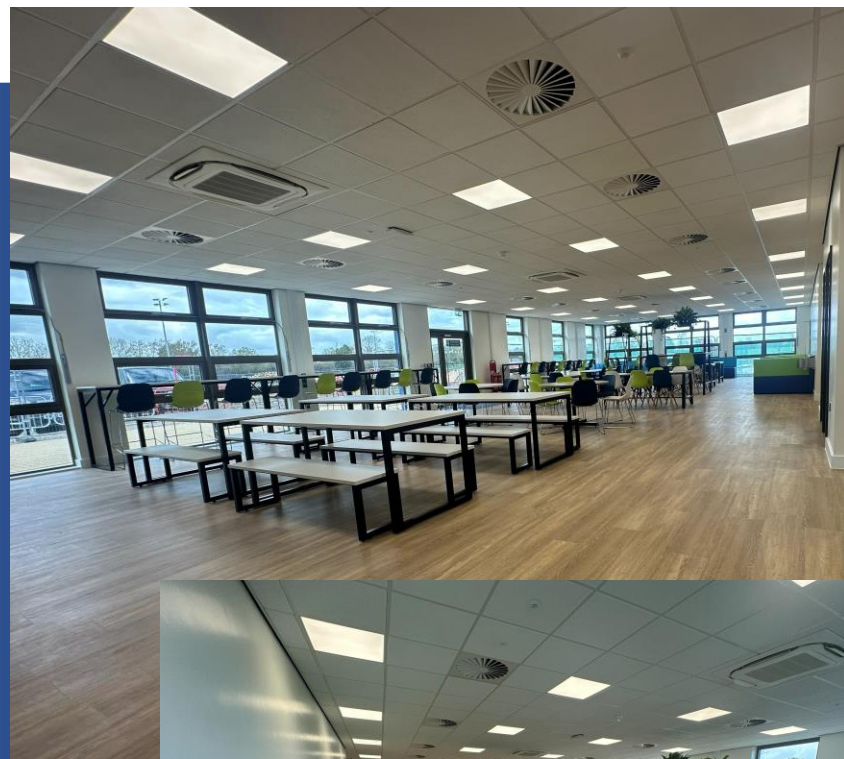
Year 12
Learning Pathways Evening



Respect, Responsibility,
Kindness



Sixth Form Centre



Our USP:



Online Lessons

Bespoke Enrichment Programme

Student Appraisals

ALL students as leaders

Preparation for the modern world of work.



Quiz Time!



**1. A Levels are assessed
entirely through final
exams at the end of Year
13.**

Answer:  *False*

Explanation: While many A Levels are exam-based, some include coursework or practical assessments depending on the subject.

2. Students can apply to up to five university courses through UCAS.

Answer:  *True*

Explanation: UCAS allows students to apply to a maximum of five courses in one application cycle.

3. An average A Level student will need to read and respond to approximately 800 words across their exam papers.

Answer:  *False*

Explanation: A Level exams often include multiple extended-response questions, source-based analysis, and essay-style tasks. Across all papers for a subject, students typically have to engage with well over 3,000 words.

**4. 360,000 students applied
to university through UCAS
last year.**

Answer:  *False*

Explanation: In 2025, UCAS received 695,740 applications from students. This is a record number.

5. Sixth Form students should complete at least five hours of independent study per subject each week.



Answer:  *True*

Explanation: This is a key expectation to help students manage the academic demands of A Levels.

A Positive Start!



Use of study spaces

Online learning - engagement has been strong

Students as independent learners

Organisation of time

Building relationships with mentors

From GCSEs to A Level: What's different?



Timetables

Independent Learning

Academic rigor and
pace

Smaller class sizes,
more dialogue

Preparation for life
beyond school

Depth over breadth

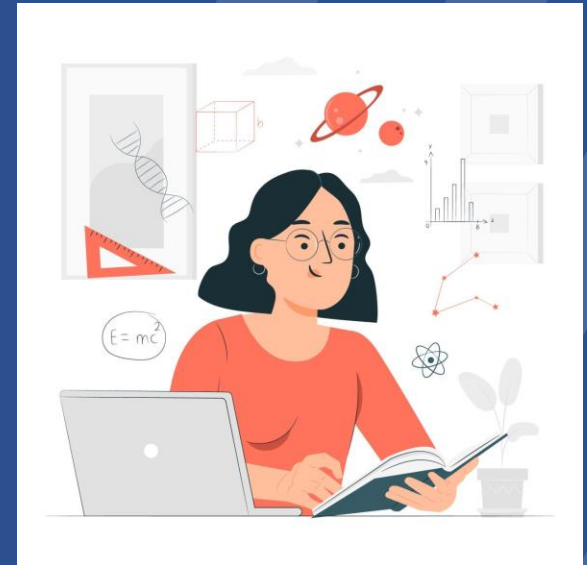
A typical weekly timetable



	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Registration	Mentoring			Mentoring	
Lesson 1	Supervised study	Chemistry (Online)			Maths (Online)
Lesson 2	Maths		Student Leadership	Chemistry	
Break					
Lesson 3	English Lit	Chemistry		English Lit	
Lesson 4	Chemistry		English Lit	Supervised Study	Maths
Lunch					
Lesson 5	Enrichment	Maths	Maths		English Lit
Lesson 6			Chemistry		

1. Depth over Breadth

- GCSEs cover a wide range of subjects with surface-level understanding.
- A Levels focus on fewer subjects (3-4), but require much deeper knowledge, critical thinking, and independent analysis.
- Students are expected to become subject specialists. This is a shift from generalist to focused learner.



2. Independent Learning

- At GCSE, students are guided closely with structured lessons and frequent check-ins.
- A Levels demand greater independence: students must manage their own study time, complete wider reading, and take initiative in their learning.
- Teachers become facilitators rather than instructors—students are expected to engage actively and take ownership.



3. Academic Rigor and Pace

- The intensity of A Level content is significantly higher.
- Concepts are more abstract, assessments more analytical, and expectations more rigorous.
- Students will need to develop resilience and time management skills to keep up with the pace.



4. Smaller Class Sizes, More Dialogue

- A Level classes are often smaller, allowing for more discussion, debate, and personalised feedback.
- Students are encouraged to challenge ideas, ask questions, and explore topics in depth.



5. Preparation for Life Beyond School



- A Levels are not just about exams—they're a bridge to university, apprenticeships, or employment.
- Students begin building professional habits: punctuality, self-motivation, and reflective thinking.
- Sixth Form also includes enrichment, leadership opportunities, and work experience, helping students grow holistically.



Teaching and Learning at Sixth Form

Key Principles for Sixth Form Teaching



While the whole-school teaching framework continues to apply, Sixth Form lessons will also:

Promote academic independence: Encourage critical thinking, extended reading, and research skills.

Deepen subject mastery: Focus on analysis, evaluation, synthesis, and independent application.

Model academic rigour: Teachers should explicitly model advanced disciplinary thinking and writing.

Prepare for future pathways: Integrate guidance on higher education, apprenticeships, or employment.

Embed scholarly behaviours: Expect students to manage their time, take initiative, and reflect meaningfully on their learning.



Online Lessons



- Should be done from home wherever possible.
- It is the students' responsibility to ensure they can access these.
- All students need a suitable device.

Structure of Online Lessons



Style of Lesson	The Lecture	Collaborative Work	The Assignment
How it matches the hybrid world of work or University-Style learning	A university-style lecture where information is delivered directly with limited questions or interruption. Mimics a workplace town-hall briefing for the workplace	A team works together on a shared task or problem. Includes structured group activity for small teams to work on.	A multi-week project completed independently. Teacher provides optional 1:1 check-ins when needed. Mirrors remote-working environments.

Summary: How Sixth Form Teaching Differs

Area	KS3/4 Focus	KS5 Additional Focus
Lesson Objectives	Knowledge + learning habit	Mastery, academic depth, independent inquiry
Activities	Varied and structured	Increasingly student-led, research-based
Reading	Vocabulary & comprehension	Extended reading, synthesis, critical analysis
Assessment	Retrieval, low-stakes testing	Essays, exam-style tasks, coursework drafts
Feedback	Verbal, written, regular	Reflective, formative, aligned to post-18 goals
Organisation	Books/folders used for progression	Folders as revision tools and evidence of learning

Use of Folders and Organisation

Folders are compulsory for all subjects and must be structured by topic or unit, following the departmental scheme of learning.

Heads of Department are responsible for creating Folder Checklists, which will outline the expectations of what needs to be included in the folders.

Folder Check Weeks are calendared through the academic year. They ensure teaching staff are assessing the students' folders in line with the Folder Checklists. Targets will then be set based on the assessment of the folder, including neatness and organisation, as well as evidence of progress.

Folders should include (as a minimum):

Lesson notes

Annotated resources

Completed Homework tasks

Assessments and teacher feedback



Dates of Folder Check Weeks:



WC 9th November 2026

WC 8th February 2027

WC 12th April 2027

WC 14th June 2027

Assessment and Feedback

Every lesson

Assessment and feedback every lesson:

- Teacher questions
- Mini knowledge checks
- Peer or self-assessment
- Teachers looking at your work

At least once a half term

Teachers will complete a folder check to assess:

- PROUD presentation
- Accuracy in your work
- Independent learning
- Organisation
- Completion of tasks

At least once a term

End of unit(s) assessment:

- Reviews your progress
- Marked by teachers
- Percentage and grade given
- DIRT tasks assigned
- Feedback on assessments

Independent Study

- 5 hours per subject per week to review what has been done in class
- In addition to homework
- Use of past papers, practice essay questions, online platforms

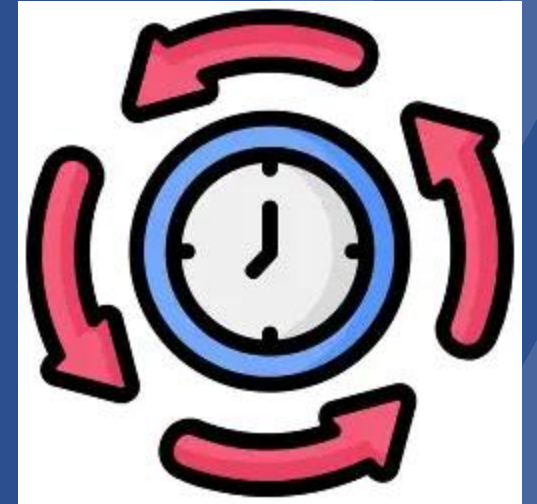
Intervention at KS5

- Student led with support from teachers
- Focus on in class and homework interventions
- Early identification of gaps and working together to solve issues
- Exam skills and revision habits
- VESPA

How can you support your child through Sixth Form?

Encourage Routine and Structure

- Help your child establish a consistent daily routine that balances study, rest, and personal time.
- Encourage them to use planners or digital calendars to manage deadlines and revision schedules.



Create a Positive Study Environment

- Ensure they have a quiet, distraction-free space at home for independent study.
- Support them in setting realistic goals and breaking tasks into manageable chunks.



Engage with their Progress

- Attend school events like Learning Pathways Evenings and Parent Consultations.
- Read progress reports carefully and discuss them together—celebrate successes and talk through any challenges.
- Please check their folders for evidence of work. Challenge any gaps.



Dates of Progress Reports:



Friday 13th November 2026

Friday 5th March 2027

Monday 19th July 2027

Thursday 29th April 2027 – Year 12 Subject
Consultation Evening



Promote independence, not isolation

- Sixth Form is about learning to self-manage, but students still need emotional and practical support.
- Check in regularly, ask open-ended questions, and be a sounding board when they feel overwhelmed.



Support their Wellbeing

- Encourage healthy habits: sleep, nutrition, exercise, and downtime.
- Be alert to signs of stress or burnout—talk to us if you're concerned.
- We have wellbeing support available in school.



Support them to think ahead

- Start conversations about future pathways—university, apprenticeships, careers.
- Encourage them to explore interests, attend open days, and take advantage of enrichment opportunities.
- Ask them about their appraisal targets and how they are making progress towards meeting them.



An Introduction to UCAS

What is UCAS?



The UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) process is how students apply to university in the UK.

The centralised system allows students to apply to up to five university courses.

Applications are submitted online via the UCAS Hub, where students build their profile, write a personal statement, and track offers.

While it may seem daunting at first, we guide students every step of the way through the application process.

UCAS Entry 2028 - Timeline



Date	Milestone
Late April 2027	UCAS search tool opens with 2028 courses
Mid-May 2027	UCAS Undergraduate applications open – students can begin filling out forms
Early September 2027	UCAS begins accepting submitted applications
15 October 2027	Deadline for Oxford, Cambridge , and most Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary courses
Mid-January 2028	Equal consideration deadline for most undergraduate courses
Late February 2028	UCAS Extra opens – for students without offers from their initial choices
30 June 2028	Final date to apply through the main UCAS process
Early July 2028	UCAS Clearing opens
Mid-August 2028	A-level Results Day (exact date TBC)
Mid-October 2028	Final deadline to add Clearing choices



Key Notes:



- Students will complete their personal statements and course research by autumn 2027.
- We will set an internal deadline in late November/early December 2027 to allow time for references and quality checks.
- Offers from universities usually begin arriving from late autumn 2027 through spring 2028.
- Thursday 24th June 2027 – Year 12 UCAS Discovery Event and UCAS Parent Information Evening
- We will report on attendance in references for UCAS.



Key Components of a UCAS Application

1. UCAS Hub Account

2. Personal Details

3. Up to 5 course choices

4. Education and
Qualifications

5. Personal Statement: 3
Questions

6. Reference

7. Application Fee

8. Submission and
Tracking

9. After Submission

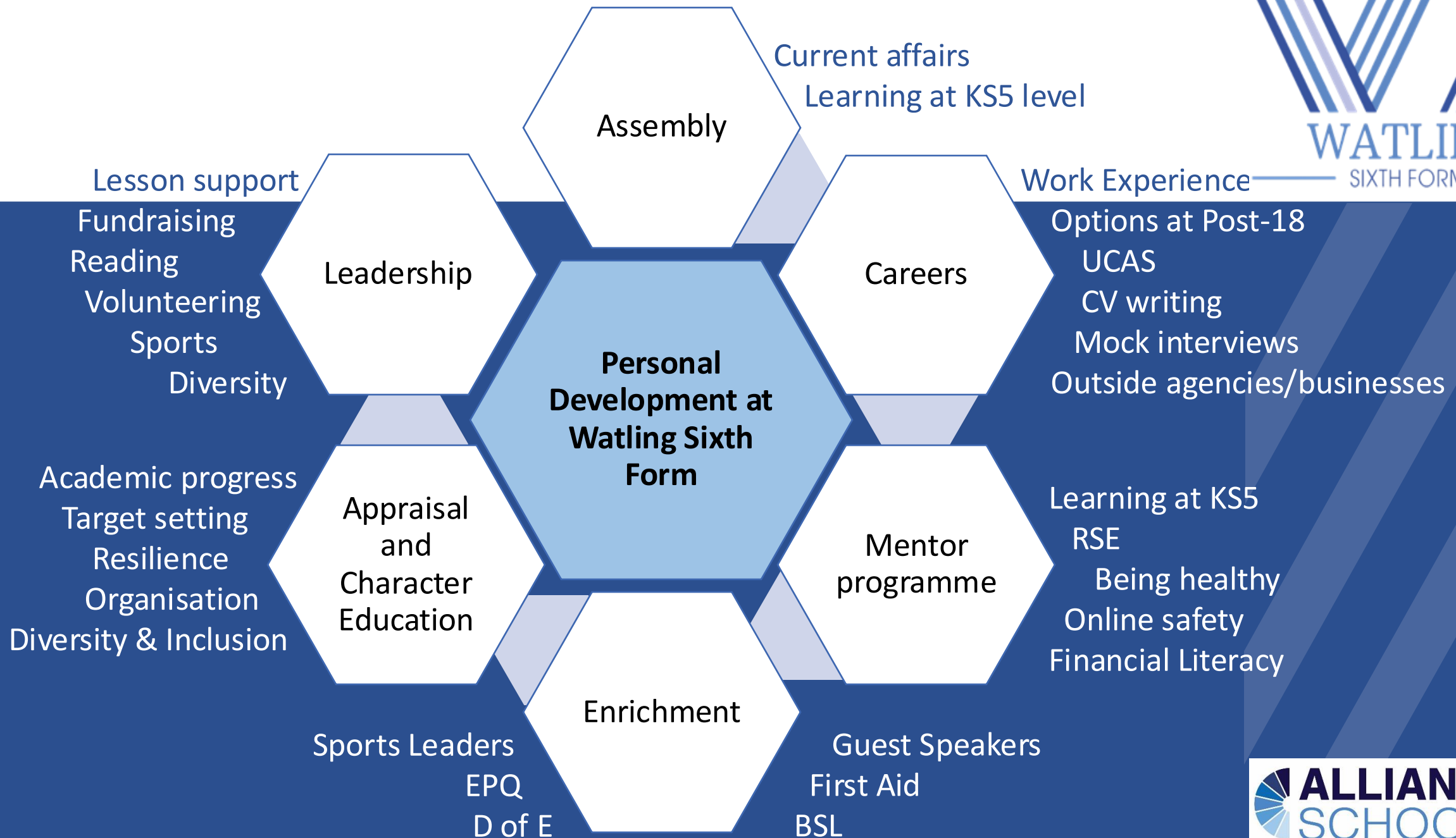
Enrichment, Personal Development and Leadership

Enrichment



- Runs every Monday afternoon.
- Supports personal growth, employability, and wider skills.
- Examples: guest speakers, volunteering, workshops, visits, work experience.
- This half term, we have a series of speakers visiting the Sixth Formers:
- iCash, Lawyers from Denton's Law Firm, Volkswagen Group UK – Business and Finance, Dentistry, University of Newcastle – Medicine, Physiotherapist, Engineer, Journalist, Tattoo Artist...
- EPQ
- Complete online courses, BSL, Cooking on a budget, First Aid...





Student Leadership



- Every Sixth Former will be a leader.
- They have been working with their Mentor to develop ideas for leadership projects.
- They have dedicated time to work on their projects.
- This will be integral to UCAS applications and will help set your child aside from competition...





Why Leadership Skills Matter



Prepares them for the world of work

Enhances university and apprenticeship applications

Improves teamwork and collaboration

Promotes resilience and adaptability

Develops communication skills

Builds a sense of responsibility

Inspires involvement and contribution - Boosts confidence and independence



Mentors



Miss Burge – 12OBE – burgeo@watling.academy

Mr Bartlam – 12KBM – bartlamk@watling.academy

Mrs Wall – 12FWL – wallf@watling.academy

Mrs Taylor – 12VTR – taylorv@watling.academy

Mrs Sowden – 12FSN – sowdenf@watling.academy

Miss DeCoster-Ryan – 12JDN– decoster-ryanj@watling.academy

Ms Johnson – 12DJN– johnsond@watling.academy

Miss Steven – 12ASN – stevena@watling.academy

Mrs Brooks -12BBS – brooksb@watling.academy

Mrs Warwick – 12AWK – warwicka@watling.academy

Mr Seeney – 12JSY – seeneyj@watling.academy



Key Dates for your diary:



- WC 9th November 2026 – Year 12 Folder Checks
- Friday 13th November 2026 – Year 12 Progress Data sent home
- Thursday 3rd December 2026 – All Sixth Form students working from home: OPEN EVENING
- Tuesday 5th January – Friday 15th January 2027 – Year 12 POP tests and vocational examinations
- WC 8th February 2027 - Year 12 Folder Checks
- Friday 5th March 2027 – Year 12 Progress Data sent home
- WC 12th April 2027 – Year 12 Folder Check Week
- Thursday 29th April 2027 – Year 12 Subject Consultation Evening
- WC 14th June 2027 - Year 12 Folder Checks
- Thursday 24th June 2027 – Year 12 UCAS Discovery Event and UCAS Parent Information Evening
- Monday 5th July – Friday 9th July 2027 – Year 12 Work Experience
- Monday 19th July 2027 – Year 12 Progress Data sent home
- Thursday 15th July 2027 – Celebration Evening



16-19 Bursary



16–19 bursaries for students ensure they can access their studies, where they would otherwise be unable to do so for financial reasons.

The bursary is intended to help students with the essential costs of their studies, e.g. important books, equipment and travel costs.

Free School Meals no longer applies to Sixth Form students. If your child was eligible for FSM last year, please check the eligibility criteria.

Further information, including eligibility criteria and how to apply, is published on our website. Please email bursaryapplications@watling.academy if you have any questions or to submit your completed application.



Top 5 Takeaways:

1. Independent Learning: your child should be completing up to 5 hours of work per week per subject outside of lesson time.
2. Organisation: Folder Weeks will be crucial in monitoring the progress of your child.
3. Get thinking ahead: Two years is not a long time...
4. Enrichment and Personal Development: your child will develop important skills to prepare them for the future.
5. UCAS