



Head of School End of Term Update Year 10 – March 2024

Dear Year 10 Community,

This week's communication comes to you in a different format with more in depth information and guidance on a number of areas.

I wanted to share with you some celebrations, key information and updates for the next term.

Please see below for more information, and please prepare that this is a significantly longer update than usual!

End of Year Assessments

As we gear up for the final term of the Year, I wanted to explain the importance of end of year assessments for Year 10 students.

In the week commencing Monday 24th June – Year 10 students will be taking their formal end of year assessments in the hall. These assessments will be on all of the content taught in Year 10.

The end of year assessments form the basis for your GCSE predicted grades. When we come around to the autumn term of Year 11 and you start to apply for sixth form, college or apprenticeships, these assessments are the grades that we will use to predict what you will achieve in your real GCSEs.

Students are encouraged to continue working hard and ensure that these assessments show their best effort and abilities so that their predictions are realistic and enable them to be offered places on their most desired courses for their next steps.

Supporting learning and revision

All Year 10 students have access to the GCSE Pod platform which is paid for by UTC Reading. This enables them to access thousands of revision videos, revision notes and practice questions to support their learning.

We strongly encourage all Year 10 students to be making the most of this resource to support their progress.

Parents can access a whole host of resources and guidance on how to support your child by visiting the GCSE Pod parent page here: [Parent Resources - GCSEPod](#)

There are also live webinars available regularly for students and parents to attend to learn how to make the most of this fantastic resource.

For help with GCSE Pod in school please speak to Jennie Thomson or Richa Pareek.

Respectful Behaviours

This week we have had fantastic celebration events with our students to celebrate their achievements this term and their respectful behaviours.

It has been fantastic to see that students are proud of their achievements!

To celebrate some of these successes I wanted to share with you that Year 10 students have now collected just under 10,000 positive points since September and are competing in overall attendance figures.

Across our tutor groups the running totals stand at:

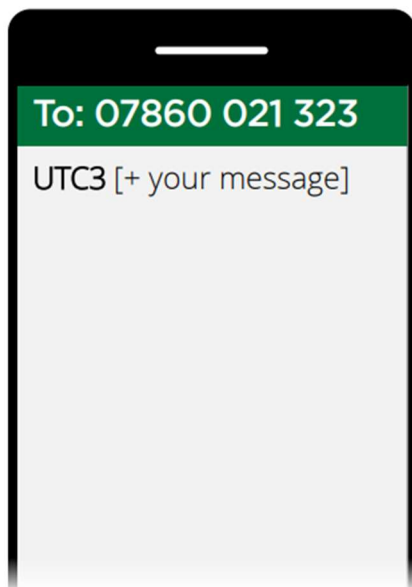
Tutor group	Total positive points
10 Tutor 1	3623
10 Tutor 2	2958
10 Tutor 4	3145

As you can see – 10 tutor 1 are pulling ahead in behaviour points and I am looking forward to seeing how the end of year totals look!

Speak Up and Speak Out with Whisper

PROBLEM? Whisper it!

If you have a problem or concern in school or at home, you can report it to a member of staff anonymously.



When To Report...

You or a friend are being bullied

You are concerned for a student's welfare

A student, member of staff, or parent has behaved inappropriately

You need to talk to someone about a problem

Suggestion for changes or improvements in school

Report via SMS or visit:

<https://swgfl.org.uk/whisper/utc3/>

I am pleased to share that we continue to have great usage of the Whisper Button and suggestion boxes to support students being able to Speak Up and Speak Out about any issues they are facing.

We have had 80 reports using Whisper and our average response time is now at 13 hours which is something we are really proud of in being able to respond to our students quickly, even over weekends, evenings and holidays.

Safeguarding Contacts over the Easter Holidays

UTC Reading is closed from 28th March to 16th April 2024. Whilst there are revision sessions happening in the building, students are able to speak to a member of the safeguarding team or any member of staff.

However, outside of these hours If you have any concerns for the welfare of a child over the holiday period, the safeguarding team at UTC Reading are on holiday and will be unavailable to respond to phone calls or emails.

Please see details below of local safeguarding contacts if you require support or advice over the holiday period

Brighter Futures for Children (Reading): Call 0118 937 3641 or email cspoa@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

Wokingham Children's Services: Call 0118 908 8002 or email triage@wokingham.gov.uk

Bracknell Children's Services: Call 01344 352005 or e-mail MASH@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

West Berkshire Children's Services: Call 01635 503090 or email child@westberks.gov.uk

NSPCC: call 0808 800 5000 or email help@NSPCC.org.uk

Child line: Call 0800 11 11

Samaritans: Call 116 123 or text SHOUT to 85258

Return to UTC Reading after Easter

All students return to UTC Reading on Tuesday 16th April to their full timetable.

I will be having a really clear focus on dress code and classroom expectations when we return so I wanted to remind our community of the expectations around this.

You can find our dress code here: <https://www.alet.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2023/11/2022-2023-Student-Dress-Code.269125211.pdf>

You can find our behaviour procedure here: https://www.alet.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2024/02/GOV017.2_Behaviour-Procedure-UTC-Reading-Jan-24.pdf

Fantastic news and achievements



UTC Reading's A Level Computer Science students working on a program to run scientific experiments from space have achieved Flight Status in a Europe-wide competition – meaning their program will run on Astro Pis installed on the International Space Station (ISS) in April!

The students – Fred, Oviya and Tanisha – are participating in this year's Astro Pi Mission Space Lab, which is run by the Raspberry Pi Foundation and the European Space Agency. They set a challenge every year for students in schools across Europe to design a program that can be run using Python programming language on a space-adapted Raspberry Pi computer inside the International Space Station.

This year's challenge was the design a program that could measure the speed of the space station specifically using sensors on the Raspberry Pi.

Fred, Oviya and Tanisha had their programs accepted for Flight Status and their programs will be run on the ISS in April. The data collected will be transmitted back to the students for further evaluation.

David McArthur, *Teacher of Computer Science at the school* said: "It's a really challenging project ... using 'Google' to calculate the speed of the ISS is pretty simple. Using a camera, an accelerometer and the IMU sensors on the Pi ...is something completely different and really challenges the students' creativity and technical knowledge."

One of the participating students, Fred Padgham, explains the science: “My project involves using the camera to capture pictures of Earth from space at regular intervals, and, employing Computer Vision techniques, detecting significant features within the photos. By filtering and comparing these features across pairs of images, I am able to identify the same features on different photos, enabling me to determine the distance between them. Combining this distance with the amount of time elapsed between captures allowed me to calculate the linear velocity.

“Overall, it has been really fun to work on, especially because exploring space distance measurements and filtering methods were great rabbit holes to delve into,” he said.

This is the second time UTC Reading students have made it through to the Flight Status phase of the competition in the last three years. In 2022/23 about 1,800 teams took part with 290 getting through to the Flight Status phase.

Good luck, space cadets, we will be eagerly awaiting progress reports from here on Earth!



A student who is making the most of all the opportunities UTC Reading can offer is marking another achievement, having become a certified Careers Ambassador for the school.

Faris Kadeb, who is studying Maths, Physics and Engineering, is an active member of the school community, where he is Student Director of Extra Curricular, and also Staff Sergeant for the school-run Combined Cadet Forces.

The Year 12 student has recently set up a series of events to benefit his classmates called Career Insight Talks, in which he has invited employers in to talk to the students about what careers in their sectors look like and how to get into them. So far Biology students have met representatives from the

NHS and Engineering students have spoken with specialist chemicals company [Infineum](#).

Faris' most recent achievement has seen him working independently towards his Careers Ambassador accreditation with [Springpod](#), a careers platform for students. As part of the programme, Faris learnt about the Gatsby Benchmarks (a framework for schools to assess the development of their pupils in employability skills). He also undertook a number of event planning tasks, looked at leadership and teamwork, efficient writing techniques, effective feedback and finished up by interviewing [Education Development Trust](#) careers adviser Selina Sparkles and running a LinkedIn workshop for Year 12.

Stephanie Mitchell, Assistant Principal and Head of Careers, said:

“Faris now understands the ‘why’ behind the careers programme at UTC Reading and is equipped with the right skills to be able to excel in his role as Student Director of Extra Curricular. We look forward to working with him.”

Faris said:

“I’ve always had a good relationship with my teachers, especially the careers team as I work closely with them to run events, however this course made me realise how much actually happens behind the scenes and it’s not as simple as it looks!”

He is happy he took the course and says he would recommend it:

“I would definitely recommend this course to anyone who is looking to become a careers ambassador as it’s helped me greatly. Setting up and running the first Career Insight Talk was really good for me, as was running the LinkedIn workshop. A lot of the things I do here at UTC I wouldn’t be able to do elsewhere and it’s massively helped me grow as a person, make really good industry links and develop skills I wouldn’t have otherwise.”

Fond Farewells and Happy Hello

As this term comes to a close, we unfortunately say goodbye to some members of our team.

Andy Ramdeen (Director of Science) leaves us to move on to a new opportunity. Andy has worked with us at UTC Reading since 2020 and as you will be aware has held a number of roles here at UTC including being a huge part of the Senior Leadership Team in our journey immediately after our OFSTED inspection. I would like to thank Andy for all of his efforts and contributions to UTC Reading and we are very sorry to see him leave, but wish him the best of luck in his new endeavours.

Edit Varga (A Level Mathematics teacher) leaves us to move onto a new opportunity in a new school. Edit has worked with us since 2018 and leaves us on an extremely high note this week having been voted the Teacher of the term by our student body. Edit has been pivotal in the success of many of our maths students and collectively from the staff and student body we thank Edit for everything she has done to help our students achieve wonderful things in Maths. I wish Edit the best of luck in her new school and her future career.

Louis George-Vaughan (Teacher of Engineering) leaves us this week to move into a role within industry. Louis has been with us for the past two years as a teacher of engineering and plays a huge role in our Combined Cadet Force. I would like to thank Louis for his dedication and effort to the CCF and for the support he has provided to our students in his time at UTC Reading and I wish him good luck in his future.

There are timetable changes happening over the Easter break to account for the changes in staffing and students who are impacted will receive a new timetable on their outlook account before Monday 15th April.

Over the Easter break we say a warm welcome to **Darryl** who is joining us in the Computing team to support delivery of programming and the learning content for students. Darryl started with us this week and has been learning the ropes of UTC Reading, ready to really hit the ground running after the Easter break.

A final note

I wanted to take the opportunity to thank all members of our community for their support at UTC Reading in helping us drive forwards the standards and maintaining high expectations.

The school has made incredible improvements over the last year and I am really proud of our students and how they have risen to the challenge to be a part of this change.

I am extremely proud to be the Head of School for a community who strives to be excellent and achieve fantastic future destinations that everyone can be proud of.

I wish everyone a fantastic break, a very happy Easter to those who celebrate, and happy Eid to those who celebrate.

Hoping that the whole community has chance to pause, rest and reflect over the next two weeks and comes back to UTC Reading feeling refreshed and ready for the final term of this academic year.

Kind regards



Jennie Thomson

Head of School