Year 12 Future Choices Information Evening

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Personal Reference

For Apprenticeship, Employment and University applications

What is a Personal Reference?

- **A personal reference is a vital part of any application.**

- **It is an opportunity to let chosen training providers, employers or universities know about a student's qualities, skills and expertise, and why they want to apply for the chosen position/course.**

- **University applications - Students can only submit one personal reference which is used for all courses they apply to. This cannot be changed after the application has been sent.**

The importance of Personal References

"Although it is undoubtedly true that admissions practitioners for some courses will put more emphasis on the personal statement than others, applicants who don't bother writing a strong statement are taking a huge risk. That's because it is highly likely that it will carry significant weight for some or all of their choices. In some cases, it might be the decider between two or more applicants who are otherwise similarly qualified".

Mary Curnock Cook OBE
Chief Executive UCAS

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Personal Reference – getting started

- All personal reference will be constructed using the ‘Unifrog’ Personal Statement Tool.

unifrog

HOME SHORTLISTS SETTINGS HELP SIGN OUT

1 Why this subject 2 Your suitability 3 Other interests

Section 1: Why do you want to study this subject?
This part should make up 30% of the total statement

Back

Examples of what you may want to write about:

1. Your knowledge of the subject area
2. Why this subject area interests you
3. What interests you the most about the subject area?

What I love most about chemistry is the constant sense of discovery: looking at the simplest reactions on a molecular level is like glimpsing a whole new world. I am keen to learn from people who are themselves contributing to our current knowledge in chemistry, and perhaps eventually I will be able to contribute to new discoveries myself.

4. Where your studies could lead

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HOME SHORTLISTS SETTINGS HELP SIGN OUT

1 Why this subject 2 **Your suitability** 3 Other interests

Section 2: What have you done in the past that makes you particularly suitable to study the subject?
This part should make up 60% of the total statement

Back

Examples of what you may want to write about:

- 1. Your academic studies related to this subject
- 2. Particular project work you've done in your studies
- 3. Things you have learnt online, and from books, newspapers, TV
- 4. Your hobbies and interests
- 5. Experiences in your year out (if you are having one)
- 6. Any relevant work experience (especially for vocational courses)
- 7. Any voluntary work

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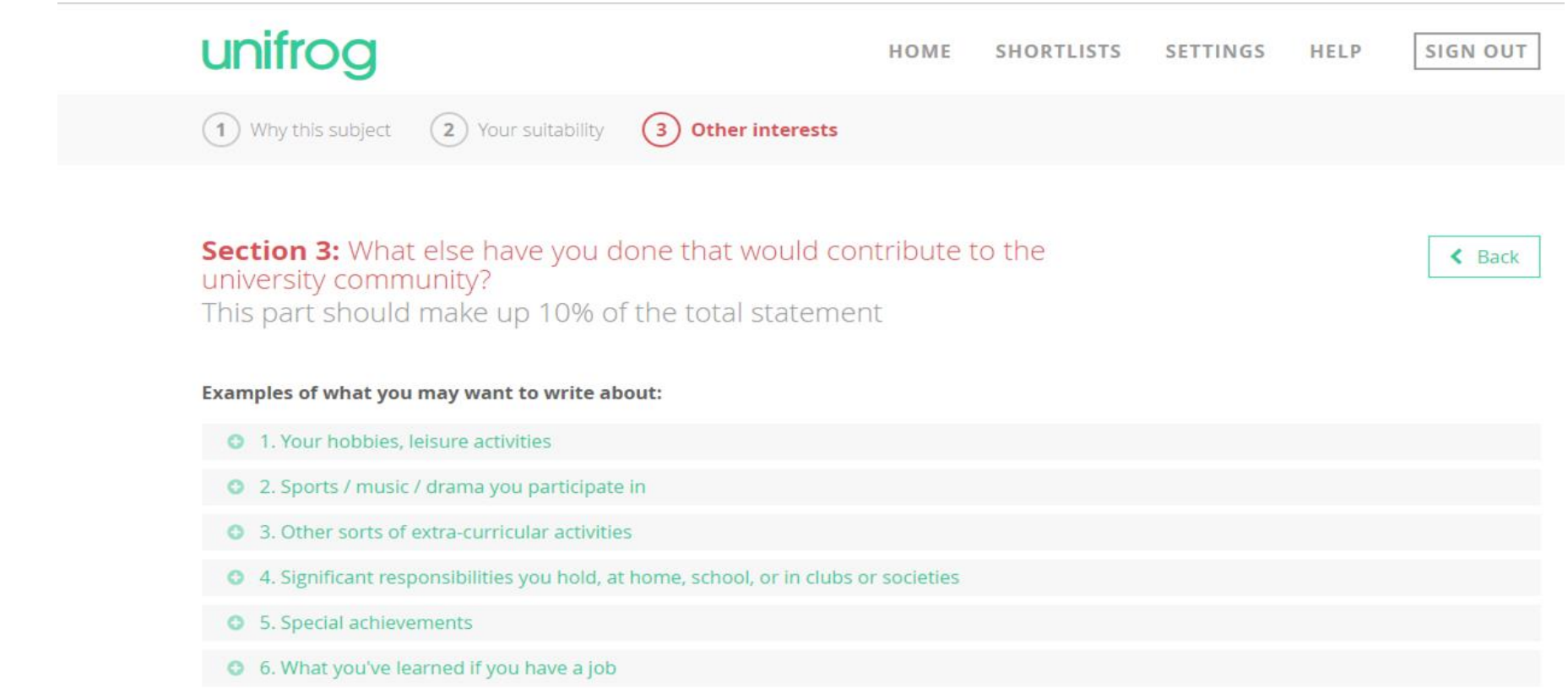

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Getting Started…..

- Start early
- Plan your research and writing – use START, UCAS and Unifrog to look at specific Apprenticeships, Employment opportunities and university courses
- Selection panels want information about why you have applied so be enthusiastic, motivational and focussed regarding what you are applying for
- What was it that initially got you interested in what you are applying for?
- Link any extra curricular activities to the entry requirements if possible

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"The strongest applicants are those who can link their extra-curricular activities to their proposed future choices"

Amy Smith

Nottingham Trent University

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Structure of your Personal Reference

1. **Introduction** – what, why, inspiration, experiences that make you suitable.
2. **Educational background** – passion for subjects, particular areas of interests, wider reading, hobbies linked to subjects, how subjects have prepared you.
3. **Suitability** – skills linked to the application, future aspirations, work experience.
4. **You!** – strengths and qualities, interests and hobbies, areas of responsibility, leadership – what makes you tick!
5. **Why you?** –add a personal touch, what you can bring to the organisation, work ethic, clubs/societies, future ambitions.
6. **Summary** – brief round up, positive finish, reiterate your enthusiasm for what you are applying for!

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Dos when writing your Personal reference:

- ✔ **Use your best English** - do not let spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors spoil the reference.
- ✔ **Show that you know your strengths** - outline your ideas clearly and use words you know will be understood by the person reading the reference.
- ✔ **Be enthusiastic** – if you show your interest in the course, it may help you get a place.
- ✔ **Expect to produce several drafts**
- ✔ **Ask people you trust for their feedback.**
- ✔ **Tell the truth** – if you have an interview, your personal reference will form the questions in your interview.
- ✔ **Make every word count!**

Don’ts when writing your Personal Reference

- × **Exaggerate! –** if you do you may get caught out at interview when asked to elaborate on an interesting achievement.
- × **Rely on a spellchecker** - it will not pick up everything – proofread as many times as possible.

‘i would like to peruse a carer in…..’

‘my A level subjects compliment this course of study.’

‘Working with children is were I see my future career.’

‘I’ve always enjoyed physical exorcise.’

- × **Leave it to the last minute** – the statement will seem rushed and important information could be left out.
- × **Use clichés or flowery language**

University Applications don’t:

- × **Mention one particular university or course in the statement**
- × **Plagiarise! –** Copy Catch

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The practical bit….

- All personal references should be typed using Unifrog, these can then be downloaded to a word document.
- Character count (including spaces is 4,000). If it is over this , most panels will cut it off mid sentence.
- 47 lines, 600 words (approx)
- Form tutor checks
- Mrs Moretta and Miss Smith for final checking and approve it before you use it for any applications.
- University applications - Mrs Lambert to submit to UCAS

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Personal Reference

- Help will be given with personal references but it must be emphasised that the reference is the student's responsibility as a young adult in presenting themselves to a selection panel
- The onus is on the student to do the necessary research as to requirements and how best to present themselves to the selection panel.
- It is important that prior to the personal reference being sent off that students and parents/carers are aware that it is their responsibility to fully undertake due diligence in relation to entry requirements etc.
- **There is no responsibility from the school in relation to the final quality of the personal reference.**

Personal Reference Timeline

- Personal Reference support at Edge Hill University – **1st July**
- Introduction to Personal References – **4th July (lessons 3 and 4)**
- 1st draft to form tutors – **8th July**
- 2nd draft to form tutors – **15th July**
- 3rd draft to Mrs Moretta – **19th July**
- Final copy (Med, Vet, Dentistry, Oxbridge) – **16th September 2019**
- Final copy (all other subjects) – **20th September**

Completed applications can be submitted from 5th September 2019!!!

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Top Ten Tips

- Start your research early – there are a lot of options to choose from!
- Know the deadlines – for some courses this can be almost a year in advance of the course start date
- Browse through courses so that you can decide what you would enjoy or be interested in
- Go to UCAS events and course provider open days
- Check the entry requirements – makes sure that you can get the grades required for the course
- Redraft your personal reference – get plenty of feedback and refine it until you are happy with it
- Understand Student Finance – to be able to make the best arrangements to fund your studies
- Be prepared for results day
- Understand how Extra and Clearing work – opportunity to apply for more courses
- Follow UCAS on Facebook and Twitter to get regular advice and to ask questions.

So, over to you……

- Research -**START UCAS and UNIFROG**
- Attend Open Days/Jobs Fairs
- Work Experience/volunteering
- Wider reading/extend your knowledge and awareness of your subjects
- Is university right for your son/daughter?
- What are the options?

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Deadlines

- **September 5th 2019** –UCAS Applications Open
- **October 15th 2019** –Oxbridge Deadline **AND**
  Dentistry, Medicine and Veterinary Deadline
- **January 15th 2020** –UCAS Deadline for **All** applications

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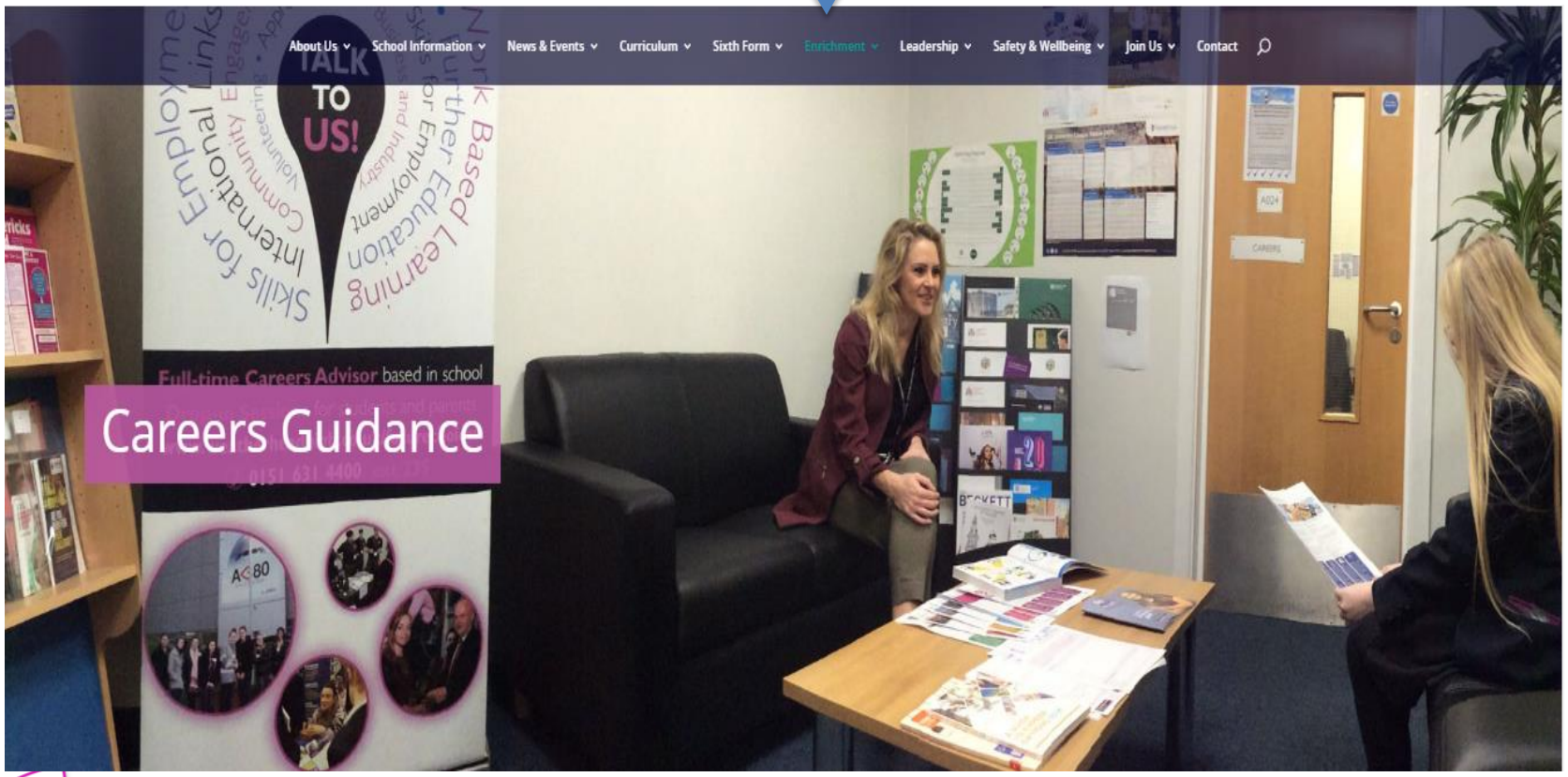
You will find the Careers information under the Enrichment tab – Careers Guidance



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Future Choices

Weatherhead has a dedicated team committed to helping students with their Future Choices – be that Higher Education, Further Education, or Careers Guidance. The Future Choices programme supports students right across school from Years 7-13.

For students in Years 9, 11 and 6th Form, making informed choices about their futures in relation to GCSE Options or post 16 study, 1:1 interviews are scheduled. Year 12 students are encouraged to complete work experience and volunteering as part of their enrichment programme and further opportunities are provided for longer placements.

Weatherhead Sixth Form benefits greatly from the dedicated support for students making successful choices for Higher Education and Careers.

Advice for Students

Drop-in careers sessions for students take place on **Monday and Thursday lunchtimes**, 12.45pm – 1.15pm and **bespoke appointments** are available on **Wednesdays, 12.45pm – 1.15pm**, all in the Careers Hub (next to the PE office).

Advice for Parents/Carers

Careers **drop-in** sessions for parents/carers take place on a **Tuesday after school** from **3.20pm – 4.20pm** in the Careers Hub.

Future Choices Team

- Mrs A Moretta, Director of Careers and Aspirations
- Miss L Smith, Guidance Coordinator
- Mrs G Jones, Work Experience Coordinator

Careers Policy

The 'Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance' policy, CEIAG, is available to view in school 'Policies & Procedures'.

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The Careers Programme

Gatsby Benchmark 1

Discover more information regarding the Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance entitlement for students read more

Career and Labour Market Information

Gatsby Benchmark 2

Options for Years 9 and 11 and Post 18 options choices. Labour market information and future employment areas of growth read more

Addressing the Needs of Each Student

Gatsby Benchmark 3

Request an interview with our Guidance Coordinator to discuss future aspirations or attend a student or parent/carer drop-in session read more

Linking Learning to Careers

Gatsby Benchmark 4

How subjects link learning with future career paths read more

Employers and Employees

Gatsby Benchmark 5

Information on student opportunities to engage with employers and employees including work experience read more

Work Experience

Gatsby Benchmark 6

First-hand experiences of the workplace, through work experience, to develop key skills needed in the workplace read more

Encounters with Further and Higher Education

Gatsby Benchmark 7

Discover the range of opportunities to meet with staff and students from Higher and Further Education establishments read more

Personal Guidance

Gatsby Benchmark 8

Parents/Carers and students please click here for further information on how to contact our Careers Advisor read more

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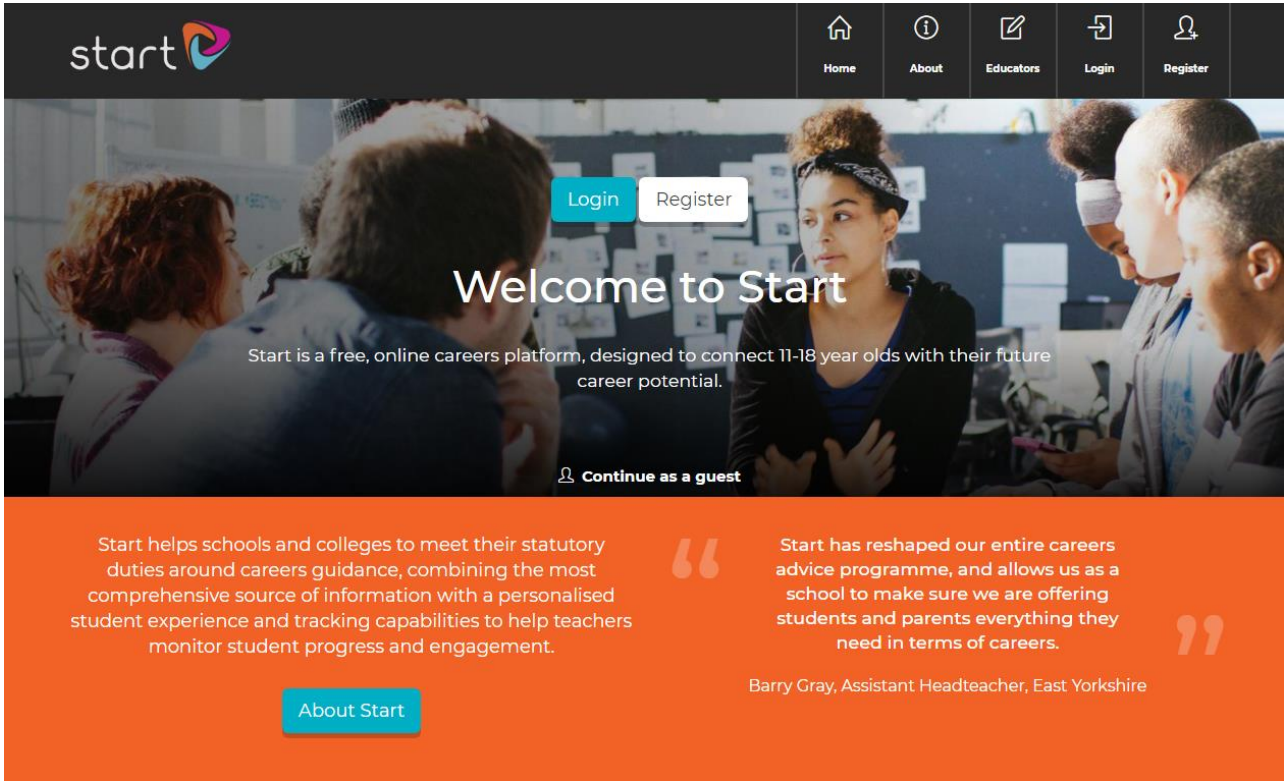
Start Careers Software



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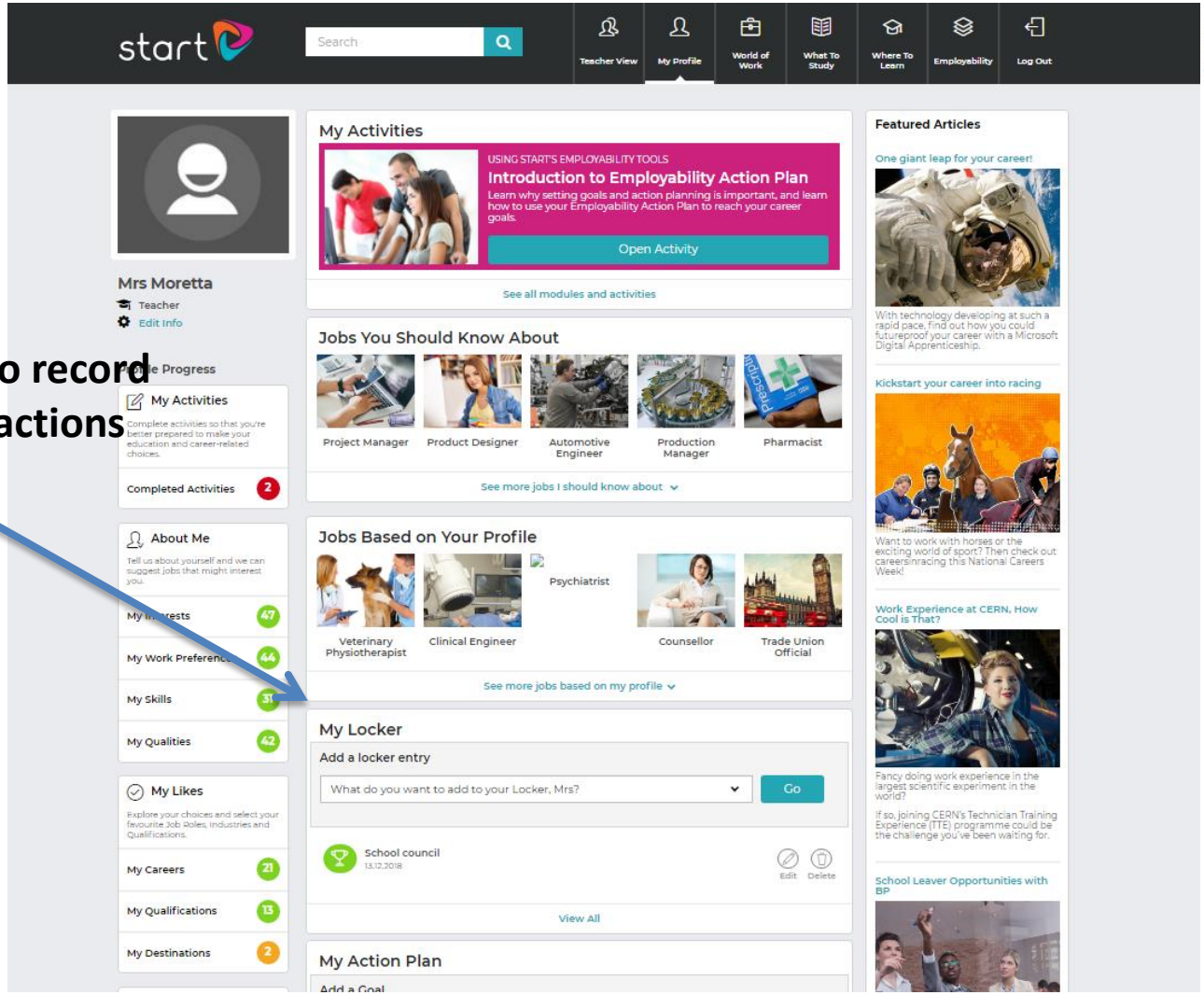
Use ‘My Locker’ to record your careers interactions



Future Choices
Higher Education
Enterprise
Apprenticeships
Skills for Employment
Further Education
Work Based Learning
Skills for Employment
International Links
Engagement
Volunteering
Community
Business and Industry
TALK TO US!

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