



# Sandwell Academy

Employers' Newsletter

December 2018

Issue 2

*Circulated to over 300 businesses across the region*

## Message from the Headteacher

### **New T Levels – combine studies with 'on-the-job' learning**

We are very pleased to be one of only a few schools in the Country who have been selected to offer T Levels, the new technical courses which are being launched in 2020. The 2 year T Level courses have been developed in collaboration with employers and businesses to help students gain the skills and knowledge needed to open the door to highly skilled employment, a higher apprenticeship or higher level study. T Levels will combine classroom theory, practical learning and a three month industry placement with an employer to make sure that the students have real experience of the workplace. The course will take two years to complete, offering a technical alternative to A Levels. Around 80% of the time will be spent at Sandwell Academy with the remaining 20% being spent at the work placement. This differs to an Apprenticeship, which is typically 80% on-the-job and 20% in the classroom. In September 2020 Sandwell Academy is planning to offer the Digital T Level. Alongside specialist teaching at the Academy, the industry placement will be a key part of the programme. Experience with a real employer in a real workplace will allow students to apply the skills and knowledge they learn in the classroom to the job, giving them a taste of the world of work that they can expect once they have completed their studies. This will give them the opportunity to develop the employability skills they need for their chosen career. To find out more about T Levels, and how you as employers can get involved please contact Sue Timms or Chris Mills at the Academy.

## Message from Careers

Sandwell Academy has once again achieved the Gold Quality in Careers Award, which was first awarded in 2015. The award is designed to accredit good practice and encourage development in schools, academies, colleges, special schools and PRUs/short stay schools. This prestigious award has been achieved through the hard work and determination of the students, Governors, our employer networks and the staff – particularly the Careers and Guidance Team, who work tirelessly to deliver outstanding careers guidance and secure positive destinations for all Sandwell Academy students. The Careers and Guidance Team have recently been featured within the State of the Nation report (Careers Enterprise Company 2018) and Academy staff and students are delighted to have achieved this award again!

## Employer Activities this term

During this Autumn Term there have been a variety of employer engagement activities taking place, some at the Academy and others off-site. Here are a few examples of the organisations that have been involved in a wide range of trips and projects.

**Liberty House Group** – *an Industrial and Metals Company founded in the United Kingdom in 1992 by industrialist Sanjeev Gupta.*

Year 10 students were involved in a 10 week STEM-based project collaborating with Liberty - Accles & Pollock Limited which is internationally renowned for metal tubing and machining processes. The Go For Set Challenge gave students an outstanding opportunity to liaise with experienced professionals, tackling real-life problems within the Liberty Factory in Oldbury. By the end of the programme the students had developed their employability, project management and critical thinking skills.



**PwC (PricewaterhouseCoopers)** – *a multinational professional services network headquartered in London, United Kingdom. PwC ranks as the second largest professional services firm in the world*

The PwC Roadshow visited the Academy to speak to the Sixth Form students about the organisation, the variety of roles available and opportunities within the Professional Service sector. The ambassadors shared their own career paths to date and gave an insight to their day to day working life. The students left the session with a greater understanding of the professional services sector and its application processes.



**BAM** – a Construction, Property and Civil Engineering Firm, as well as working in Public-private partnerships.

BAM continue to support Academy students in a variety of ways including mock interviews, dragons den activities and work experience placements. Students took part in a local community project to design and decorate a Christmas Grotto that could be moved to various sites as required. The project involved talking to various site staff and learning to use power tools. The feedback from students was that they had enjoyed the project and looked forward to presenting the finished grotto to the centre.



## Employer Spotlight

**Sid Sidhu**

**Community Champion, Tesco West Bromwich**

Tesco regularly work with the Academy students, taking part in a number of activities including mock interviews with Years 11 and 13, Tesco's recruitment processes with the Year 12 Business group and Dragons Den panel with Year 10 students

Tesco are the first recipient of the Employers Charter which recognises their commitment to the Academy.

**How have you been involved with Sandwell Academy?** I've been working alongside Sandwell Academy for about four years.

**Why do you and your organisation get involved?** Not only is it an important part of my job role to identify and build trusted community relationships, but both myself and Tesco believe in supporting opportunities for young people.

**What would your advice be to other organisations considering engaging with the Academy?**

My advice would be, please do! Everyone from the staff to the students make you feel welcome; you are helping students to make the right choices in whatever capacity you are able to support, you will be making a difference.



## Volunteers – We Need You at Sandwell Academy

There are a number of ways to support the staff and students including:

- **Mock Interviews**
- **CV Workshops**
- **Work Experience Placements** for Year 10 and Year 12 students
- **Dragons Den** -  
*these can take place at the Academy or the businesses premises where students will pitch their ideas to a panel of judges as a part of their Business course*
- **Inspirational Speakers**
- **Curriculum linked projects** -  
*help students to explore and respond to a problem or a challenge over an extended period of time*
- **Curriculum linked workshops** -  
*support the staff to enhance their lessons by supporting a workshop related to your Industry.*

Is your organisation able to help to “Influence the Work Force of the Future”?

The Careers Team are always looking for work experience placements for our Year 10 and Year 12 students to gain a real understanding of the world of work. If you can offer a placement for 2019 or would like more information please get in touch.

To discuss how you can get involved in shaping the next generation of employees, please contact Sue Timms, Employer Engagement Officer [stimms@sandwellacademy.com](mailto:stimms@sandwellacademy.com)