

A Brochure for Parents

# PREVIEW

THE CAREERS SELECTION PROGRAMME



[www.coa.co.uk](http://www.coa.co.uk)

**COA**  
opening doors of opportunity

## Why a careers programme?

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It is important at this stage for young people to select suitable sixth form subjects, to develop a greater awareness of possible future careers areas, to organise work experience and to understand effects of the rapidly changing trends in national and global employment. More than ever they need a clear sense of purpose towards higher education and to be strongly motivated in their approach to academic/vocational work. A good careers education and guidance programme can help in achieving these objectives by:

- Identifying a range of potential career and higher education course areas
- Providing a framework for comparative careers and higher education research
- Helping pupils to understand the nature, needs, requirements, challenges and opportunities of potential careers
- Helping avoid costly mistakes when making sixth form subject choices
- Providing a focal point for interviews and discussions
- Offering objective and impartial career and educational guidance

Preview is a careers guidance programme designed to meet these criteria, and to introduce young people to the worlds of work and higher education.

## Cambridge Occupational Analysts

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Cambridge Occupational Analysts have operated in the fields of careers and higher education guidance for 20 years. Based in the UK where they serve 1,500 schools and colleges, they also work with schools in many overseas countries.

COA's interviewing and guidance team are professionally qualified independent advisers, with many years of experience of careers work in schools, careers services, or careers consultancy.



## How does Preview operate?

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Pupils complete a questionnaire about their interests, abilities and personal qualities without pressure of time. Their answers are then scored and collated to produce an interest profile covering more than 45 broad career areas. From this the pupil generates his/her own careers education workbook.



Pupils are then encouraged to complete their workbooks using their Careers Investigation Record, **The Careers Directory** and by acquiring relevant work experience and advice.

## How is the effectiveness of Preview assessed?

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COA place the technical quality of their careers programmes and aptitude tests high on their list of priorities. The services of a well-established occupational psychologist are used to evaluate the technical characteristics and properties of all COA careers programmes and to ensure they meet the highest standards of reliability.

## What do pupils and parents receive?

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By taking part in Preview each pupil receives:

- A **Careers Workbook** (in question and answer format) based on data provided by the pupil and staff via the Preview questionnaire
- A **Careers Investigation Record** to record the pupil's research into potential careers
- A copy of **The Careers Directory** - updated annually by COA
- A copy of the **Personal Development and Work Experience Guide**
- Access to **WORKBRIEF** (the electronic version of the Careers Directory) on the school network or their own computer
- A **1:1 Careers Interview** with a member of the school careers staff or the COA Interviewing Team
- Optionally a set of aptitude tests - if the school wishes to include these
- Access to the COA Information helpline

# What does the Preview workbook contain?

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The workbook reveals a picture of the young person's stronger occupational and academic interests, related abilities and personal qualities. In addition to covering careers the pupil is already familiar with, it can also list many completely new possibilities.

Important sections of the workbook include:

## Careers Selection Worksheets

Each double-page worksheet covers a well-matched career area (eg law), and related careers (eg barrister, solicitor etc).

On the **left-hand** page are details of the career area:

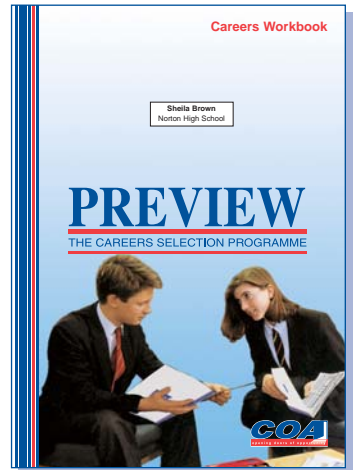
- An overview of the career area
- Descriptions of each of the different careers in this area
- Important academic subjects required for entry to relevant HE courses
- Page references to **The Careers Directory** providing the basis for further careers and higher education research by the pupil

On the **right-hand** page pupils are challenged to consider their suitability for these careers by means of:

- Bar graphs showing the relative strengths of important supporting areas of interest
- Comments explaining the relevance of these supporting interests
- A 20-point career check questionnaire, for the pupil to complete, listing some of the important interests, skills and abilities involved
- Cautionary Notes - when some of his or her answers are negative

## Year 12 Subject Selection Charts

To assist in choosing sixth form subjects, the workbook contains subject selection and availability charts. These help pupils choose sixth form subjects which strongly interest them and meet the entry requirements for their more likely higher education and careers needs. The availability chart lists the actual subjects available in the sixth form at their present school.

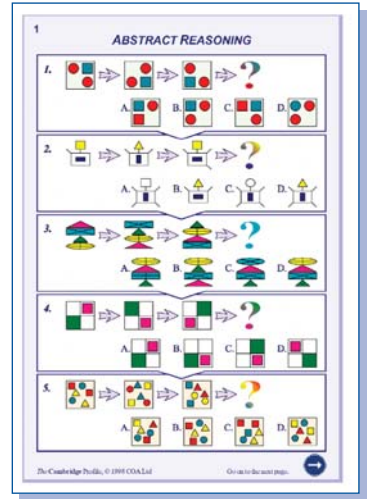


# The Cambridge Profile Aptitude Tests

If a school has asked to take these aptitude and ability tests, the results can be incorporated in the workbook. The tests comprise:-

- Verbal Reasoning
- Numerical Reasoning
- Abstract Reasoning
- Spatial Reasoning
- Arithmetic Calculation
- Spelling
- Working Quickly & Accurately

The results are relevant in making university course and careers decisions. They can also throw light on a pupil's academic strengths/weaknesses, thinking and learning styles.



## Careers Interviews

After one-to-one handover sessions with school careers staff or members of an independent advisory team, pupils should be fully capable of explaining their workbooks to parents. This presentation of relevant facts and concepts, enables careers advisers and parents to take part in the consideration of potential careers areas and sixth form subject selection.



A wide range of potential future careers opportunities is revealed and further comparative research is essential. The objective is for pupils to be ready to make their own sixth form subject selections and to develop their future careers/courses plans. Pupils complete the Careers Analysis Forms provided, and thus produce a record of their research.

## Careers Investigation Record

The Careers Investigation Record acts as a focal point for research. It includes Career Analysis Forms which allow careers to be researched systematically and on a comparative basis.

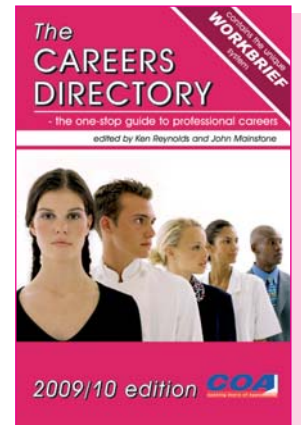
The Careers Investigation Record is fully co-ordinated with *The Careers Directory* to make further research straightforward and timesaving. The directory provides website links and reading references for the student to investigate.



## The Careers Directory

*The Careers Directory* contains up-to-date information on some 425 different careers. Laid out in an innovative double-page format, it uses the acronym WORKBRIEF to cover the sub headings:

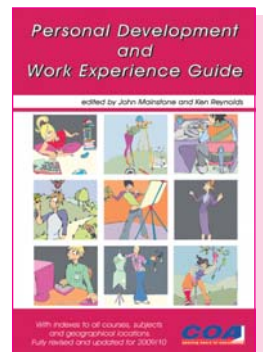
- |                                    |                             |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>W</b> hat is involved?          | <b>B</b> road outlook       |
| <b>O</b> pportunities for training | <b>R</b> elated occupations |
| <b>R</b> equirements for entry     | <b>I</b> mpact on lifestyle |
| <b>K</b> ind of person             | <b>E</b> arnings potential  |
|                                    | <b>F</b> urther information |



The **WORKBRIEF CD-ROM** version of *The Careers Directory* also offers direct web links from which the most up-to-date information can be obtained.

## Personal Development and Work Experience Guide

Each pupil receives a copy of this book which details personal development, work experience, sport, music, leadership and teamwork training, Gap Year, degree taster courses and career awareness opportunities. Additionally A level and equivalent revision courses during the Easter and Summer holidays are covered.



## Advisory Services

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COA advisory staff will answer questions from parents promptly, should they require help in interpreting Preview or have any other queries. (Please email or telephone COA)

The COA School Leaver Advisory and Interviewing Service available free of charge for school leavers, who have taken Preview, up to the age of 24.

## What people say about COA Careers Programmes

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“For less than the cost of a meal out – it completely changed my son’s motivation and commitment to his work and his outlook on his future.”

**Parent**

“The interviewing team were their usual ‘sparkling’ selves and managed to draw out our most timid and disaffected pupils as well as inspiring the more capable ones.

The fact that a considerable number of my pupils made a special point of seeing me to convey their positive views, speaks for itself.”

**Reigate Grammar School**

“My thanks to all of you at COA for enabling the careers tests to go so smoothly and for the very successful and productive interviews that followed.

...Many parents said how pleased they and their daughters were with the test results and they appreciated the content of the workbooks and the quality of the interviews...”

**Norwich High School for Girls**

“We have found the whole process to be very comprehensive and our pupils are very pleased with the results. For some it has confirmed their original career ideas and higher education ambitions, whilst for others it has opened up new avenues for them to explore.”

**Castleknock Community College**

“The workbook is wonderful – but what really added significantly, in moving my son on, was the follow-up interview where the depth of interpretation and discussion of implications for the future was superb.”

**Parent**

## Who's Who at COA

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**John Mainstone, MA, MRSC** - Chairman and Managing Director

**Joyce Lane BSc, MA** - Academic Director

Former Head of Careers and Head of Sixth Form, Norwich High School, GDST

**Charles Johnson, BSc, PhD, CPsychol, AFBPsS** - Director of COA Psychological Services

Former Chair of British Psychological Society Steering Committee on Test Standards

**Tim Mainstone, MA, MBA, FRGS** - Marketing and Sales

**Ken Reynolds, MA, DipCG** - Director of Information Services, Former Deputy Head,

Cornwall Careers Service

## Advisory Council

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**Anthony McClaran, BA** - Chief Executive, QAA

**Virginia Isaac, BA PGCE** - Director of Marketing & Communications, UCAS

**Gill Dann, BA, DipVG** - Head of Careers, Colston's School

**Maria McKay, MA** - Former Vice Principal, Havering Sixth Form College

**Guy Nobes, MA** - Head of Careers, Marlborough College

**Nicholas Spring, MA** - Head of Careers, Felsted School

## Regional Directors and Advisors

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**David Allworthy, BSc** - Former Head of Careers, Kent College, Canterbury

**Tony Bell, BSc, CertEd** - Former Head of Careers, Queen's College, Taunton

**Diana Bingle, BA, DipCG** - Former Head of Careers, Cirencester College

**David Bishop, MEd CertEd CFPS** - Former Head of Careers, Reigate Grammar School

**Di Bisp, Dip PE, CertEd CFPS** - Former Head of Careers, Stowe School

**Ros Chaplin, BA, CertEd** - Former Careers Adviser, Lady Eleanor Holles School

**Bruce Cockburn, BA** - Former Head of Careers, King's School, Tynemouth

**Christine Davidson, BA, PGCE** - Former Head of Careers, Bruton School for Girls

**Peter Davis, BA, PGCE** - Former Head of Careers, Pate's Grammar School

**Judith Drury, BSc, PGCE** - Former Head of Sixth Form, Scarborough College

**Shirley Emmins, MBA (Ed), BA, PGCE** - Former Head of Careers, Northampton High School

**Margaret Evenden, BA** - Former UCAS Administrator, St John Payne School, Chelmsford

**Graham Garrett, MA** - Former Headmaster, Wellingborough School

**Jill Garrett, BSc, MA** - COA Psychological and Guidance Services

**Brian Hardcastle, MA, PGCE** - Former Senior Master, Forest School, London

**Michael Hewett, BA, PGCE, CFPS** - Former Head of Careers, Reed's School

**Bob Jackson, MA** - Former Housemaster, Brentwood School

**Bob Lee, BSc, PGCE** - Former Head of Careers, St George's College, Weybridge

**Rob Lloyd, MA, DipEd** - Former Higher Education Consultant, Sherborne School for Boys

**Sue Nursey, BA, CertEd** - Former Careers Co-ordinator, Norwich High School, GDST

**Alison Parks, BA, CertEd, CEG** - Former Head of Careers, Durham High School for Girls

**Sandi Robinson, MA** - Careers Education Consultant

**Alan Sankey, MA** - Former Housemaster, Harrow School

**Tony Savage, BEd** - Former Head of Careers, Portsmouth Grammar School

**Jasper Selwyn, BSc, MA** - Former Head of Careers, Marlborough College

**Peter Sutherland, MA PGCE** - Former Senior Master, Whitgift School

**Godfrey Thomas, BA, DipEd** - Former Housemaster and Head of Careers, Brentwood School

**Ann Underwood, BA, DipEd, DipCG** - Former Head of Careers, Bedford High School

**Anne Waterman, DipCG** - Former Prospects Careers Consultant

**Vanessa Westfold, BA** - Former Head of Sixth Form, More House School

**Jane Wilders, BA** - Former Careers Adviser, University of Cambridge Careers Service

**George Wise, BSc, PGCE** - Former Head of Careers, Ashville College

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