Contact Details

Mr. Nick T H Du Boulay BA (Hons)
Mr Du Boulay has a BA (Hons) in History at Warwick and also studied at Tulane University, New Orleans and the University of Venice. Appointed to Strathallan in 1975, after 5 years working in the city of London, to teach History. He took over the Careers Department in 2000. Previously he was housemaster of Simpson for 15 years. Close liaison with the Strathallian Club, parents and the Perth Rotary Clubs have helped to provide a wide range of contacts. Currently he teaches PSHE and History is a visiting tutor in Simpson and helps to coach the cricket XI.

Mr Du Boulay is available to see pupils at almost any time and to see parents by appointment. To make an appointment please call Nick on +44 (0) 1738 815018 or email: careers@strathallan.co.uk

Facilities

The extensive Careers Library holds the prospectuses of all UK universities and many specialist colleges. The UCAS web site can be accessed at www.ucas.ac.uk and there is also a CD-Rom library.

Current copies of 'The Big UCAS Guide', 'The Scottish Guide' and 'The Good Universities Guide' are in the Careers Library and in each House. Although at present potential university students can apply for up to five courses on their UCAS form (normally completed in September, October and November of the Upper Sixth year), only two offers, one 'firm' the other an 'insurance', can be held. There is therefore a need for careful research and judicious choice of university and course.

Course Selection

The following list of recommended Sixth Form subjects may be useful but it is by no means exhaustive and should only be regarded as a general guide. The Careers Advisor can give more specific information.

UNIVERSITY COURSE	RECOMMENDED SUBJECTS (underlining indicates that the subject is sometimes essential)
Accountancy	Maths
Agriculture	Chemistry, Physics, Maths/Biology
Architecture	Art or Design (portfolio), Maths, Physics, and for some, English
Art and Design	Art
Biology	Biology, Chemistry, Physics
Business Studies	English, Maths
Chemistry	Chemistry, Physics/Maths
Classics	Latin, Classical Civilisation
Computer Science	Maths
Dentistry	Chemistry, Biology, Physics
Drama	English
Economics	Maths
Engineering (Chemical)	Chemistry, Maths, Physics
Engineering (Other)	Maths, Physics
English	English
French	French

Geography	Geography, a Science
Geology	Maths, Physics/Chemistry
German	German
History	History
Hotel Management	English
Law	No Specific Subjects
Mathematics	Maths, Further Maths
Media Studies (Journalism)	English
Medicine	Chemistry, Biology (Glasgow), Physics/Maths
(A Levels are usually essential. In some cases the third A level can be an 'Arts' subject)	
Music	Music (Grade exam may be needed)
Pharmacy & Pharmacology	Chemistry, Biology, Physics, Maths
Philosophy	No Specific Subjects
Physics	Physics, Maths
Politics	No Specific Subjects
Product Design	Maths, Physics, Art, Design Technology
Psychology (Arts)	No Specific Subjects
Psychology (Science)	Two Sciences
Sociology	No Specific Subjects
Spanish	Spanish
Surveying	No Specific Subjects
Tourism	No Specific Subjects
Veterinary Science (A levels usually essential)	Chemistry, Biology, Physics/Maths

Oxbridge

The Oxbridge Programme has been successful in sending pupils to Oxford and Cambridge Universities year on year.

It is open to those with high academic potential, with the expectation that candidates will gain at least three A grades at A Level. Selection at both universities is by interview, although short tests may be given and work done at school may be registered. Those who wish to consider entry should contact the Careers Adviser and discuss the matter with relevant Head(s) of Department early in the Lower Sixth. Candidates can only apply to Oxford or Cambridge through the UCAS system by the 15th October. Oxbridge classes are provided and are strongly recommended for all candidates. Some pupils may prefer to apply once they have received their A-Level results.

Armed Forces

The School's Combined Cadet Force plays a key role in pupils applying to the armed forces.

The Army, Royal Air Force, Royal Navy and Royal Marines offer cadetships, bursaries and scholarships, which, while highly sought after, may enable Sixth Formers and university students to finance their course. As in civilian life, there is a strong demand for engineers. Most schemes involve some long-term commitment. Liaison officers visit the School regularly, and if interested pupils have not already been seen in the Fifth Form they should contact the Careers Adviser for an appointment with the appropriate Liaison Officer early in their Sixth Form career.

Gap Years

Some of our leavers take a 'gap' year between school and university, in which case it is wise to obtain a deferred degree course place before leaving School. Some university departments are willing to grant such places, but it is essential to check in every case. The proposal to defer entry is made on the UCAS form. Applicants should have clear plans for the 'gap' year before completing the UCAS form.

There are a large number of attractive projects available either for the whole year (in practice about 15 months) or some part of it. Voluntary or paid work in the UK or abroad can be arranged through specialist organisations, and the School has links with schools in South Africa, South America and Australasia which may enable leavers to take up teaching, helping, and sports coaching posts. Personal skills can be extended through business and language courses. A section in the Careers Library is devoted to 'gap' projects. Those interested should contact Mr Du Boulay by the summer term of their Lower Sixth year for advice.

Your University Degree and Job Prospects

Applying
Choose a subject and course in which you have a genuine interest and a University and location in which you feel comfortable.

Very few degrees qualify you directly for a job and you are likely to need post-graduate training.
• If you are struggling with an integral part of your intended subject at school, it is probable that you have chosen the wrong course for you. There is an obvious danger of being thrown out or achieving a moderate degree eg. a Lower Second, a third or not doing Honours in Scotland.
• The Scottish Faculty system provides enough flexibility to navigate yourself to a good degree. nb. 40% of people at Scottish graduate in a different subject from the one for which they applied.
• Be aware of selective and recruiting universities. Employers are well aware of this
• Don't choose a vocational course for the sake of it.
• There are some very good courses at the lesser known universities which may be ideal for you. Use Course Finder to help you to do your research.
• Don't ignore courses with a placement element, even if they are longer. Employers like evidence of experience.
• Don't regard good university guides as a gospel, they are an indicator only and the most highly rated courses may not suit your learning style.
• Popular Courses at Selective Universities. These often have numerous applicants for each place and you may be rejected for no logical reason. eg if you want to read English Literature at Edinburgh you might apply for a closely related but less popular choice such as Scottish Literature, which has fewer applicants.
• If you have an easy offer, don't ease off. Potential employers will look at your UCAS points and will want 300+.
• Employers like academically rigorous courses because they know the calibre of graduate.
• Most employers claim not to discriminate against graduates from lesser known universities, but generally actively recruit from the top universities (see Milk Round).
• Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee and Aberdeen are all very good universities, but the first two are more fashionable and therefore harder to get into. People think Aberdeen is next to the North Pole!

Once you are at University
Your priority must be a First or Upper Second.
• Many job offers are conditional on a First or Upper Second.
• Keep your interests going. Employers like busy people with time management skills.
• Get a summer vacation job or do something relevant to your course eg. an expedition or an archaeological dig.
• If you take a term time job, make sure that it does not impinge on your seminars, tutorials, lab. work

etc. Some universities discourage the practice.
• Once you have a good idea of what you want to do, use the University Careers Office/ Appointments Board, your contacts or your initiative to obtain a summer placement. This is an excellent way of impressing a potential employer.
• Don't leave applying for jobs until the last minute.
• Employers visit the more prestigious universities in order to recruit. This is known as the Milk Round. Take advantage of this and you may find a job that you had never previously considered.

Brutal Statistics
• There are 39 applicants for every graduate job and a good degree is no guarantee of employment.
• In the short term, with the credit crunch, this will get worse. Many employers are already cutting back on graduate employment. Hopefully, by the time that you graduate, the climate will improve.
• Historically graduate jobs pay considerably better over the course of your working career.
• Don't be too rigid in your career ambitions; new careers emerge and others become obsolete. A job for life is a thing of the past!

Useful websites for employment
www.monster.co.uk
www.milkround.com

Nick Du Boulay, Careers Advisor