

Background

S5 Individual Action Plan (IAP) meetings are the second individual engagement core pupils receive with the LIFT OFF programme, after their S4 Core Pupil Meeting (CPM). These meetings allow LIFT OFF staff to have a personalised discussion with pupils, providing them with an opportunity to reflect upon their learning to date and their preparation for upcoming exams. Staff discuss the pupils S5 subject progress, prelim results, extracurricular activities, and career/study goals for after school. Together with the pupil, staff set 'action points' for the pupil to complete in their own time to help them towards achieving their post-school goals.

Ultimately, the aim of the S5 IAP meetings is to encourage a positive post-school destination, with a focus on supporting pupil's aspirations to progress on to higher education. Several objectives have been set out to help achieve this. These include using the meetings as an opportunity to further build rapport with pupils through personalised interactions, collecting information about pupils S4 attainment and current subject choices to ensure they are on track to achieve their goals, and to provide information, advice and guidance that is tailored for each pupil and is relevant to their goals.

Previous Recommendations

Several of the recommendations outlined in the 2019-2020 S5 IAP Report were unable to be fully implemented this year due to changes in delivery as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the following changes were successfully made for the 2020-21 IAP meetings:

- Microsoft forms questionnaires were sent to pupils and used to collect responses.
- Continued to ask pupils to include foundation apprenticeship courses in the subjects they were studying.
- Our 'Useful Links' document was updated to include up to date sources to provide the best general information, advice and guidance for all pupils.
- While the pupil feedback questionnaire could not be promoted at meetings, pupils were reminded of this via email and MS Teams, which resulted in a good number of responses.

Covid-19 Adaptations and Delivery

Due to the national lockdown we were unable to visit schools to complete in-person IAP meetings. Instead, pupils were sent a MS Forms questionnaire to complete, which covered their academic achievements in S4, subjects being studied in S5, future plans and subject interests, as well as extracurricular activities. Finally, the

form asked pupils to select areas which they would benefit from additional support on information on from LIFT OFF and whether or not they would like to arrange further discussion with a member of the LIFT OFF team. Pupils received a reminder text message prior to the deadline to help maximise the number of questionnaires submitted.

All pupils that completed the questionnaire received an email follow-up, which contained links to videos prepared by the LIFT OFF team covering additional support areas the pupil selected, information about any future plans they had mentioned, and had our 'Useful Links' document attached. Pupils were also informed about our 'Ask A Student' website page to allow them to get in touch with a student volunteer. If the pupil had selected that they would like further discussion about the questionnaire, this initial email was used to offer and plan either a phone call or Teams direct message chat.

Approximately 2 weeks after the follow-up email, all pupils were sent an email containing a link to a feedback questionnaire focused on the IAP support they received (again, using MS Forms). This link was also shared on their schools LIFT OFF Teams channel.

Evaluation

The responses gathered from completed IAP questionnaires as well as the pupil feedback questionnaire were used to gauge the effectiveness of the IAP support as a whole. Key areas of this are summarised below.

Participation

Of the 234 pupils that were entitled to IAP support, 147 completed the MS Forms questionnaire. This response rate of 63% was particularly good, and perhaps higher than anticipated, especially considering it was in the middle of lockdown. The previous academic year, when meetings were in person, saw a 56% attendance rate. 64 pupils requested further discussion with a member of the LIFT OFF team about additional support topics and their future goals, which was completed as phone calls or direct message chats via MS Teams.

IAP Areas of Support

With meetings being conducted online this year, as part of the questionnaire pupils were asked to select any of the following areas for which they would like to receive additional support/information:

- Finding HE courses and course options
- Exam preparation and study skills
- Building confidence
- Developing transferable skills and experience
- Starting your personal statement
- Contextual admissions, support for: ASN, Care leaver, estranged, etc.
- Unsure about future options: exploring what's right for you.

The responses selected by pupils is shown in **Figure 1**. On average, pupils were selecting 3 options for support.

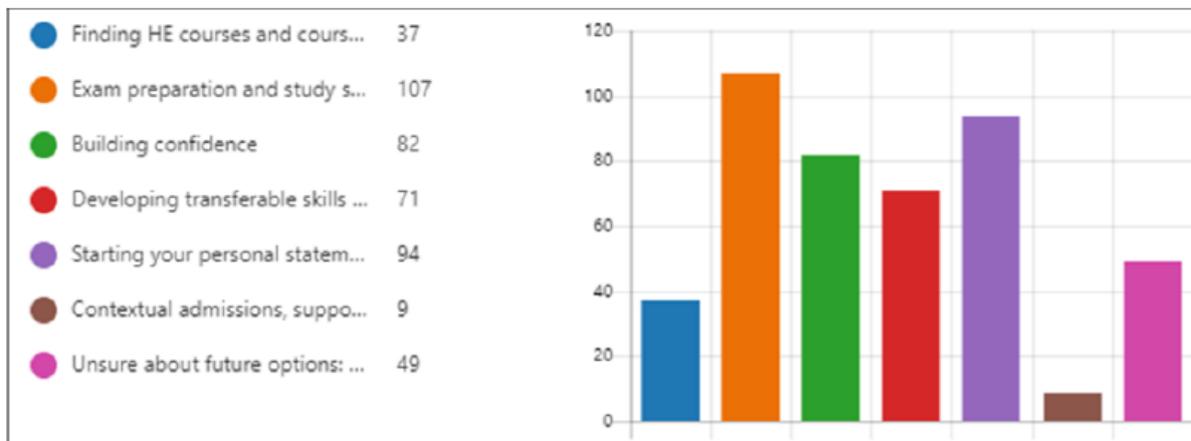


FIGURE 1: Bar graph showing the number of selections for each area of support/information offered to pupils.

As shown in **Figure 1**, “Exam preparation and study skills” was the most requested support topic. This was expected considering the emphasis that has been placed on independent study during lockdown this year and the uncertainty surrounding exams. It was also good to see “Starting your personal statement” as a popular topic, suggesting many of these pupils are beginning to think about university applications. While pupils were directed to support for this, we also advised that we would be speaking to them about this in more detail during our S6 support.

Pupil Feedback: In order to assess the effectiveness of this year’s online IAP support, pupils were asked to complete a feedback questionnaire via MS Forms. Overall, 80 responses were gathered, with these containing mainly positive feedback. Most pupils found the online form quick and easy to complete (**Figure 2**), found that the additional areas of support offered matched what they required (**Figure 3**), and pupils generally found the resources and tailored information provided in the follow-up to their questionnaire response useful (**Figure 4**).



FIGURE 2: Breakdown of how easy pupils found completing IAP questionnaire, on a scale of 1 (too long/difficult) to 5 (very quick/easy).

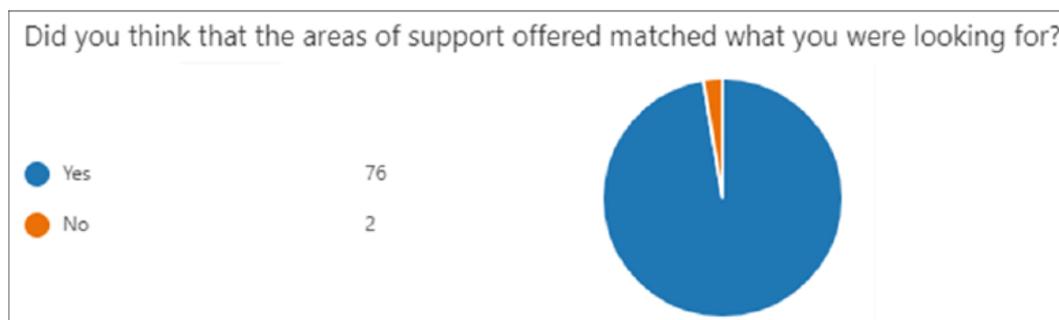


FIGURE 3: Number of pupils that found that the areas of support offered matched what they were looking for, compared to those who did not feel the necessary information was available.

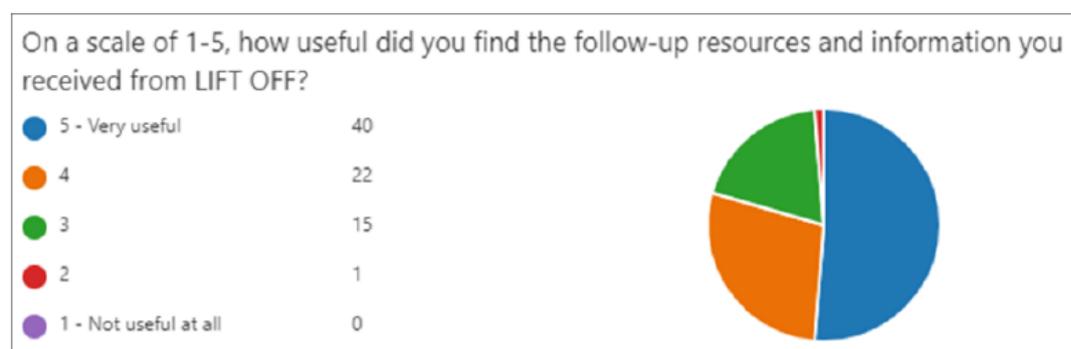


FIGURE 4: Number of pupils that found the follow-up resources and information useful, on a scale of 1 (not useful at all) to 5 (very useful).

Finally, questions which asked for any additional areas of support pupils would like to see included or if they had any additional questions for staff were generally either unanswered or offered thanks for the support they had received (e.g. “it was all really beneficial for me so thank you!”, “The phone call I received afterwards was very informative and helpful.”, “It was very useful and easy to complete”).

Future Recommendations

Based on student feedback and discussions with LIFT OFF staff, the following recommendations are proposed for IAP meetings in the 2021-22 academic year:

- Continue using MS Forms to send the IAP questionnaire to pupils in advance of any meeting. This allows staff access to responses before discussion with pupils, as well as being a useful tool for tracking and evaluating overall responses to questions.
- Continue using MS Forms to send feedback questionnaire to pupils. Promote this during meetings and follow-up to ensure as high response rate as possible.
- Start producing more subject specific information and guidance that can be provided for pupils (e.g. portfolio requirements for creative subjects, auditions for performance subjects, what to expect from practical classes in relevant subject) to go along with general information.