

Teacher Guidance Notes

(Please read before informing students about the APP)

We are really excited about welcoming a new cohort of students onto our programme! We are keen to work in partnership with you to help target those young people who need additional support and opportunities to realise their full potential.

We have put together this guide to help you, and your students, through the APP application process.

What kind of student are we looking for?

The Aspiring Professionals Programme is specifically aimed at high-achieving students from low income backgrounds. Our students will largely come from families where there is little, if any, involvement in the leading professions. To ensure we target those students who would benefit most from the Programme, we need your help.

As competition for places increases every year, when deciding which students to put forward, we urge you to consider the following factors:

Will the student:

- Realistically achieve ABB in their A Level exams?
- Thrive on an academically driven programme?
- Positively represent the SMF, and your college/sixth form, to prestigious employers?
- Engage fully in all aspects of the Programme, including e-mentoring?
- Have the right attitude to remain dedicated throughout Y12 and Y13?

By helping us in this way, we hope to attract those students who will gain the most from the APP.

Eligibility

To apply for the SMF Aspiring Professionals Programme, students must:

- Be currently in Year 12
- Have at least 5 A grades at GCSE
- Be predicted at least ABB at A-level
- Live in/within a commutable distance from London

They must also meet one of the following additional criteria:

- Be currently, or previously, **eligible** for Free School Meals, which must be confirmed by a teacher at their current or previous school.

OR

- Be the first generation in their family to attend university **and either**

-Currently attend a school where 18.9% or more pupils are eligible for Free School Meals (London average according to DfE, January 2011) **or**

-in the case of those at sixth-form and further education colleges, having previously attended a school where 18.9% or more pupils are eligible for Free School Meals

In all cases, students must have a teacher complete the eligibility form to confirm they meet the above criteria, which is downloaded on our website.

Would you like the SMF to provide an information talk about the APP in your school/college?

This year, the SMF is offering to conduct short 20 minute PowerPoint presentations about applying for the APP in target schools/colleges, subject to capacity. If you would be interested in the SMF delivering a talk to students in your sixth form about what the APP is and how they go about applying, please email app@socialmobility.org.uk to request a visit. All visits will need to take place before the student application deadline of 14th December 2011.

The application process

Online application form

The APP 2012 application form is now live and students can apply online at <http://www.socialmobility.org.uk/>. The application form is easy to follow so students should not feel daunted by it! All questions are compulsory, and the application form is made up of the following five sections:

1. Basic contact details and emergency contacts

2. Sector Preference

As our Programme seeks to increase access to a range of leading professions, we ask students to choose a career sector preference. This helps us match them with an e-mentor, and potentially an internship and other opportunities, in an area that interests them. The eleven sectors we work with are **Accountancy, Architecture, Banking & Finance, Business, Engineering, Media and Creative, Medicine, Law, Politics, Science and Technology**. A full description of each career sector can be found on our website. We also welcome applications from students who do not yet have a clear idea of what they want to do career wise; such students can choose the option 'no preference' on the application form.

It is worth bearing in mind the following:

Accountancy

Students must be studying Maths and/or Further Maths at AS-level.

Architecture

Students must be studying Art at AS-level. Physics and/or Maths would also be useful.

Engineering

Students must be studying Maths, and at least one of the following other subjects at AS-level: Biology, Chemistry, Further Maths, Physics. The SMF has very few opportunities in aeronautical engineering so please encourage your students to think about the sector more broadly.

Law

The SMF has a strong base of support in the legal sector and, as a result, we generally have more internships than in our other sectors; in principle, we aim to give every student two internships so that they can

experience life at both a barrister's chambers and a firm of solicitors. With this in mind, those who are genuinely passionate about Law should definitely consider applying to the Programme.

Medicine

As you might imagine, this is by far the most popular career choice amongst students, despite the fact that it is becoming increasingly difficult for students to get on to medical courses at university. We are encouraging students to think more broadly about their career choices beyond just medicine. Any student considering medicine as their sector preference should be aware that internship opportunities are fewer and the mentors we have are mostly medical students rather than doctors/consultants.

As Medicine is such a popular and competitive sector, we don't want to falsely raise students' aspirations. Therefore to be accepted on to the Medicine strand of our programme, students must have achieved at least 6 A Grades at GCSE, with at least Grade A in all GCSE science subjects in either double science or in the single sciences (Chemistry, Physics, Biology). They must also be studying Chemistry and at least one of the following other subjects at AS-level: Biology, Maths, Further Maths, Physics.

Students are unlikely to be able to change their career sector once they are on our programme. We would therefore discourage them from choosing a different sector merely to get onto the Programme as they will need to demonstrate passion for that chosen field during APP activities. Please note, the SMF does not currently offer opportunities in dentistry, veterinary science or physiotherapy.

Science

Students must be studying at least two of the following subjects at AS-level: Maths, Further Maths, Chemistry, Biology, Physics.

3. GCSE grades and A Level grade expectations

4. Assessment Questions

- Questions 1 – 5 offer students the opportunity to demonstrate their skills as well as explain why they have chosen their career preference. We recommend **150 – 250 words** on each question
- Question 6 – 8 are more challenging. However, we find that we learn the most about a student's personality and interests from these three questions, and therefore we would suggest that students expend additional effort on these questions. We recommend **300 – 500 words** on each.
- Please make it clear to your students that spelling, punctuation and grammar is taken into consideration and, whilst the application is electronic, **abbreviations or text language will not be accepted**. Examples of this include use of a lower case I when referring to themselves in the middle of sentences and text abbreviations. To avoid this problem, we recommend that students write their answers out in Word first and then paste their answers in to the online application form. This gives them an opportunity to read over their answers first, as well as taking advantage of spell checker.
- Please make the students aware that an edited version of their application form will be sent out to employers prior to any internship.

5. Teacher Reference

The teacher reference provides us with a real insight into the character, potential and circumstances of each individual student, from the people who know them best. This is why it is so important that we receive a comprehensive reference from you which, amongst other things, might explain extenuating circumstances that mean a student did not achieve the GCSE grades they should have, or explain any factors which might make their participation certain aspects of the Programme difficult.

Students will be asked to fill in the name and email address of a teacher in the teacher reference section of the application form. As soon as the student has submitted their application, an email will automatically be sent to your email address. **Each student application has a reference number.** Please click on the link provided in the email, which will take you to our teacher reference form. To complete the form you will need the student reference number (or the student's first and last name). Full details of what to include in your reference can be found on our website.

Forms to complete and send in

As well as completing the online application form, students will need to send in:

- a) A parental consent form – which will need to be signed by a parent/carer giving permission for the student to take part in the APP.
- b) A completed eligibility form - which will need to be signed and stamped by their GCSE School to confirm that the student /the school, meets the Free School Meals criteria.

Both of these documents can be downloaded from the SMF's website. The forms must be returned before **21st December 2011** to: Aspiring Professionals Programme, The Social Mobility Foundation, Grosvenor Gardens House, 35 - 37 Grosvenor Gardens, London, SW1W 0BS.

Dates and Deadlines

- Deadline for student application: **Wednesday 14th December 2011**
- Deadline for receipt of eligibility form and parental consent form: **Wednesday 21st December 2011**
- Deadline for teacher reference **Monday 9th January 2012**

We must have all items by the deadline to consider an application

We hope that you have found this guidance note useful and informative. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact the School and College Relations Team on 0207 953 4007 or via app@socialmobility.org.uk.

We look forward to receiving applications from your students!

With best wishes,

The SMF Team