

## Being a 6<sup>th</sup> former

The common stereotype of a 6<sup>th</sup> former is one that is portrayed as a person that generally does no work. An example of this is the BBC's production of Grange Hill where the 6<sup>th</sup> form at this school are never involved in any work based scenes, but instead are seen in the common room chatting and generally doing nothing. This idea is very wrong. In addition, I will do my best to correct your view.

Many young people my age were un-certain what lay ahead after the 2 year GCSE course. The options that lay ahead were many. All seemed to have their advantages, some had disadvantages. Me as an individual was very reluctant to go out and find employment, and college did not seem appealing. Nothing seemed appealing except The 'easy' option. – **The 6<sup>th</sup> form**, and without having to make any new friends and without having to fill heaps of forms this was the option for me. My memories as a Year 7 seeing 6<sup>th</sup> formers swan around as if they owned the place had soon vanished and the bundles of free time that I dreamt of sitting in the renowned common room playing cards/pool/darts and drinking coffee had gone. I like a huge percentage of my year were in for a shock.

The free time turned out to be less than a few hours a week, and the Pool table and dartboard were none existent. I had been surprised – but not pleasantly! However, I gritted my teeth together and got on with life as a six former. The workload, which I thought, would be laid back and straightforward was more complicated and was very hard. A huge step up from GCSE. I thought the new A/S levels were have supposed to have bridged the gap between GCSE & A-Level? – **They had not!** Instead the Subjects which were fun/easy and all together a good laugh @ GCSE were now boring/tedious/and hard. I know I had made the wrong decision. I still know it to this day. Nevertheless, what could I do? About five people could not hack the workload dropped out, and choose a get away before the first half term. I questioned my reason for stopping on at the sixth form and none of them was work related. My reasons for stopping on were simple. I did not want to start all over again, in that college would mean making new friends, and adjusting to another system. I did not want that. Life in the sixth form was not as I thought, and I new it! However, as time went by I realized that the 6<sup>th</sup> form had some advantages some of these advantages would work out quite nicely if you played the system correctly!

Having an older brother that was a 6<sup>th</sup> former at the same school, I should have learnt a lot, but I did not. My Brother and me are not very close and perhaps if I have asked him I would have had a different viewpoint on my post 16 education. I cannot blame my brother, I cannot blame myself, and you cannot blame anybody for the unexpected.

