

## Outstanding results for Extended Project Qualification

A group of Sixth Form students have achieved excellent results in their Extended Project Qualification. The results, published this month by the AQA exam board, show that out of nine students who took the qualification, six achieved A\* grades and three were awarded A grades. At Colfe's the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is undertaken on a voluntary basis and involves the Year 12/13 students choosing an area of study, researching it and then structuring and writing a 5,000 word essay.

While the qualification helps establish independent research skills, support is provided by teachers who are interested in the area of study chosen by the student. Together they spend time discussing the project and the themes within it. This means that students can develop a deeper understanding of a specific area of their

interest well beyond the confines of the 'A' level specification

As an additional bonus, the qualification also counts as an 'AS' level, adding to the students ability to prove their interest in a topic to universities and employers.

Director of Sixth Form Spencer Drury said "These are exceptional results and it is a real credit to the students, but also the staff who put so much time into supporting them. I am pleased with what a varied and wide ranging set of subjects were chosen this year. I'd also like to pay a special thanks to the Deputy Head of Sixth Form, Dr Thompson, who has structured the EPQ programme this year.

"I'm delighted with the success of the EPQ which has really stretched the students and been a real preparation for university"

The subjects this year included:-

The definition of psychopathy  
The redevelopment of London's docklands

To what extent was the Diadochi's Succession of Alexander's Empire typical of the Ancient World?

Why was the 18th Amendment doomed from the start?

Mr Drury added "Finally it is worth noting that Universities may even make lower offers as a result of applicants undertaking the extended project. The University of Bristol has stated that:

"The University is supportive of the requirement to undertake an Extended Project ... It is expected that some admissions tutors may make two alternative offers to those offering this qualification, one of which involves success in the Extended Project (e.g. either AAA at A-level or AAB at A-level plus Extended Project)."

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### Special points of interest:

- Year 12 students should be considering the ways in which they might be able to improve their Personal Statements when applying to university this term. You should be thinking about possible work experience, academic extension or other ways of expressing your interest in a subject.

- One way of improving a personal statement might be to enter relevant essay competitions like the Vellacott History Prize at Peterhouse. If you are interested in doing this, please do speak to the relevant Head of Department.

## The Franklin Expedition—why did they all die?

The Colfe's Historical Society has welcomed a top British researcher and author to talk about the doomed Franklin expedition to the Arctic.

William Battersby, the author of 'James Fitzjames – the Mystery Man of the Franklin Expedition', spoke to a group of Colfe's students and teachers about the fate of the expedition led by John Franklin in 1845 where 128 men, including Franklin, died.

James Fitzjames was the charismatic captain of one of the ships, the HMS Erebus, who

thought the expedition, would make his name but instead he never returned.

Head of History Mr Foster says "This was an interesting take on a well known aspect of naval history, and we are very grateful to William Battersby for taking the time to give us such a great lecture."

Ed LeGassick, Year 13, enjoyed the talk "This was particularly captivating as it unravelled around a topic we do not study within normal lessons- that of 19th century naval history. With places such as Greenwich

on our doorstep, it is a slice of history which is difficult to neglect and forget! Particularly interesting was when Mr Battersby spoke about the new discoveries he had made to update what were otherwise seemingly accepted 'fact'."

Mr Battersby was pleased to be able to discuss his book with the students. "This was a delightful hour, and the children were interested and asked some very good questions. I hope they went away with an increased interest in explorations and naval history."

## Reporting back from the Fabian Society New Year Conference

By James Maby

Before going to the Fabians' Society Conference last Saturday, I was warned by certain others that there would be constant moaning about the coalition, how negative the cuts were for the economy and how Labour could have done the task in hand better. Some parts of this statement are true. However, through this article I will try to state my observations and give my own opinion, as a new student entering politics with a little background knowledge.

The Fabians' Society has been in existence for 128 years. The purpose of the conference was to discover a 'workable economic alternative to the coalition's plans'. So far there has been "Old Labour" and "New Labour" and what the Fabian's Society want to create now is "Next Labour". The "Next Labour" state will be "rebalanced" and we will have a more responsible economic system. We must tame irresponsibility and bring prosperity.

The main people who attend this event are usually Labour Party voters and the age range was from 16 upwards. I was surprised to see so many students in their 20s as I had an image of the older generations contributing the main audience of this event. On to what happened on the day. This event had the title of "The Economic Alternative". The day comprised of a talk from Ed Balls, the shadow chancellor. Ed Balls had many things to say, the key main points that he put forward were:

"The Growth Challenge: We want a new more responsible

capitalism",

"Austerity is self defeating. The IMF has said this about Britain's economic response and said we should slow down the cuts. We need temporary tax cuts and investment in jobs to stop a decade of slow growth and increasing debt."

"We can't make a commitment to reverse cuts."

"Pay restraint in the public sector would have been necessary whoever was in government."

"Jobs must be our priority before pay." As you can see the main fact that would be pulled out of the papers is that "We can't make a commitment to reverse cuts." That statement automatically puts Labour back into the mess they were in before in that it has no appeal to the Labour Party traditional voter.

The next talk that followed shortly after included a panel including Caroline Lucas, leader of the Green Party; Chuka Umunna, the shadow Business Secretary; Neil Lawson, chair of Compass; Deborah Mattinson and Kitty Evans, who was the former economic secretary to the treasury. The panel opened to questions from the floor. Here is a summary of the issues raised:

- Chuka Umunna MP, said it is a massive political issue as to who bears the burden for the mistakes of the crash. We need to reform the private sector and have a "better" capitalism. How can an active government work with business to create better paid and better quality jobs in this country? There is not only one way to deal with the crisis, as the government says. We need

to stimulate the economy now. We quadrupled the number of apprenticeships when we were in power. There were over one million in the public sector. We must expect to bring back apprenticeships. Maggie defined people by what they have rather than what they are. We are mutually dependent beings. The state has the power to foster private sector growth.

- Caroline Lucas, Leader of the Green Party, criticised Ed Balls' speech because he appeared to embrace current policies. Therefore he was not putting forward an alternative capitalism. We need radical re-distribution. Austerity isn't working ... Ed is morphing into the Tories. She made the argument that economic credibility is not just about austerity, it is about progressive taxation and wise investment. There is money out there – from tax evasion, spending on Trident, the Bank of England has just laid its hands on billions to buy bonds.
- Neil Lawson, chair of Compass, said we can't put a human face on capitalism because it doesn't work in a human way. It was only strong trade unions and groups like the Fabians who brought capitalists to the table in the 1940s to deliver health care and full employment. So what are we going to do now to contain capitalism properly? I don't agree with Ed Balls' idea to constrain pay at the bottom of the income scale. If he had argued for pay constraint for top earners, at least there would have been some consistency in his argument.

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Labour MP Chuka Umunna was elected as MP for Streatham in 2010. He is currently Shadow Business Secretary.

*"Green opened the lecture by mentioning that he believed that the vast majority of people in the UK feel that we need less immigration and that he agrees."*



Colfe's School Politics Department is an associate member of the Fabian Society, so students are able to attend lectures and debates.

- Deborah Mattinson said Labour was known as the party who slosh your money around. They have to win trust back.
- Kitty Usher, MP, former economic secretary to the treasury, said there were three ways to kick start the economy towards growth. Through boosting consumer confidence, business investment (not happening because GDP is low) or government investment (the government has ruled this out). If Labour says we will spend more, we will lose the next election. Old Labour was distrustful of the private sector but New Labour was in awe of it. Next Labour must be confident about the ways to achieve our goals. We should ditch universality in the payment of benefits and means test them. Labour's response to the crisis was the best in the world. We were ahead of all the markets all the way. Our debt was not too high. The Tories have tried to turn the public's attitude to Labour back to what it was in 1992. We have to use the right rhetoric to get back our credibility

During this session, an older lady wanted to ask a question and the chair of the panel didn't choose her and she stormed out, announcing that how can we talk about a democratic system when this procedure is

not democratic. This was an uproar which was amusing in some respects but also justified.

The next session was a talk about Europe and the crisis, including a panel of Helen Goodman MP, Prof. Stephany Griffith-Jones (economist), Chris Leslie MP (shadow foreign secretary to the treasury), Lord Roger Liddle (Labour Peer and chair of the policy network) and Linda McAvan MP (Chair of the panel). Prof Stephany Griffith-Jones said we should focus on growth, create a national investment bank and effectively regulate the financial sector. Lord Roger Liddle said if the Euro failed there would be economic Armageddon and we must work with our democratic partners on a plan for growth and regulation. Nations cannot solve problems on their own. The response to the crash of 2008 worked because it was coordinated internationally.

Various speakers warned of xenophobia and the rise of the extreme right in times of austerity.

The next talk that I chose to go to was fittingly titled "What do the young people have to look forward to in a new capitalism?". This event puzzled me as I wasn't sure what the whole point of the talk was. It was the standard 4 panelists

and a chair all offering their views, then opening up to questions from the floor. However, I didn't find it enlightening at all, as there were figures being thrown at the audience for example Zoe Gannon said the average annual pay package for a FTSE 100 chief has this year topped £4.2m, or £81,000 per week and in 2009, 2,800 people were paid over £1 million. It was also suggested that high pay has a negative effect on economic growth. Zoe Gannon (who works for the high pay commission) thought these were all relevant facts about today's economy but I could not decide what they meant? If people are overpaid, this is a clear problem, but how do we sort it out? This message frustrated me because there were so many speakers in that session but no one offered a formal solution about what to do in practice.

To conclude, this conference was an eye opener for me particularly when Ed Balls offered new solutions for "Next Labour". However, these policies did not seem to be greatly different from the current Coalition ones and he could not promise to reverse "the cuts". The deciding factor about whether these policies are perceived to be different will be whether if Labour are voted into office We will have to wait and see.



Labour's Shadow Chancellor Ed Balls outlines his vision to the Fabian Society (courtesy of the Guardian).

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## Colfe's Golfer selected to train with England squad in Spain

Talented Golfer, Max White (pictures with Colfe's golf team-mate Alex Hill), in Year 13 has been selected to train with the England Squad next month in Spain.

The England squad held nationwide trials as part of the Advanced Apprenticeship for Sporting Excellence (ASSE) and Max was successful in becoming one of the 18 boys and girls who will train at Arcos Gardens in Spain.

The training will involve not only improving his player profile with help from top specialist golf coaches, but also learning more about the academic side with written work and sport physiology.

The 17 Year old is also travelling to Spain again later in the term as he has been selected from hundreds of players in Kent to be part of a 16-strong County squad to play a tournament in Mercia.

Max has been playing golf since he was 9 years old and currently plays off a handicap of 1. He has had some very impressive golfing success. Last Year Max was 3rd in the Kent Order of Merit (which is a 30 tournament season), he won the Birchwood Open and the West Kent under 25 Championships. Max has played in the Andalucian Junior European Open in Spain and last week he qualified for the Kent Winter Trials at Royal St



Colfe's Foursomes team will play Whitgift in the next round of the HMC Foursomes competition this term.

## Reflecting on the life of Erwin James (as part of the Focus & Forum programme)

By Dom Smithies

At the start of December year 12 had the pleasure of listening to Erwin James give a talk on prison life. Issues and various solutions regarding crime, punishment and prison are controversial because there are widely differing views on punishment and rehabilitation particularly depending on the crime that has been committed.

Mr. James was convicted of murder and served a sentence of twenty years. He is a writer for the Guardian writing articles about these controversial topics. His articles are worth a read and can be found here <http://www.guardian.co.uk/profile/erwinjames>. In his talk he spoke about life before, during and after prison.

Mr James had quite a sad, harsh childhood which he believes, whilst a contributory factor, cannot be blamed for his starting on a life of crime. He committed his first crime at a very young age: he robbed a sweet shop, and he said that he remembers believing that 'society owed him': "I had lived an itinerant, dysfunctional existence from a very young age. For a number of years I had been subjected to serious violence and emotional deprivation that I am not going to go into detail about. By the age of 10, I was running wild, sleeping rough and I didn't really know where I was supposed to belong in the world."

I do believe society owed him because all children are entitled to a safe and secure environment, and I believe the criminal system needs improvement. Most people

complain about the lack of punishment and justice, but I personally believe more needs to be done to rehabilitate criminals to prevent them re-offending and more interventions and diversionary investment to prevent people, who are likely to fall into a life of crime, from going down the wrong path.

Whilst in prison, he filled his time reading books borrowed from the library. He was inspired to use the time effectively to better himself after being motivated by a psychologist that spent a long time persuading him that he had some worth. However he acknowledges that he is one of a very select few that did productively use his time. He said that the majority of the prisoners didn't have the option to read and borrow books because they could not read and write. I found this shocking. He went from having no self worth to believing in himself, and with help and support, sat some exams and got some certificates and qualifications which increased his self-esteem.

He believes, and I agree, that more needs to be done to motivate the people in prison and to rehabilitate them. While some people believe they should be 'left to rot' or 'forced to do manual labour' as part of their punishment, I do not believe that would be effective in supporting their re-integration into society when released.

During his time in prison, Mr James obtained a job writing articles for the Guardian called 'life inside'. This helped to prepare him for when the time came for him to be released. Around 70% (90% for under

20's) of people re-offend within two years after they are let out of prison. This demonstrates that current measures are insufficient. Most re-offending is due to the fact that ex-offenders have difficulty obtaining employment, some have nowhere to go, and many are disadvantaged by unequal treatment. Although it cannot be forced, I do believe there needs to be more education and motivation to do something productive in prison. Over time this will reduce prison overcrowding as re-offending rates should fall. Mr James has demonstrated that you can turn your life around and for that I admire him. Furthermore, he is writing and speaking to people to educate them and to make them understand that more needs to be done for prisoners. 'You only get out what you put in' is a well known adage, and if nothing is done to rehabilitate criminals then their behaviour is unlikely to improve.

After his release, Mr James continued writing. He successfully adapted back to 'normal' life and now continues to write for the Guardian as well as giving great motivational talks to young people to inspire them and to help them develop their own opinions.

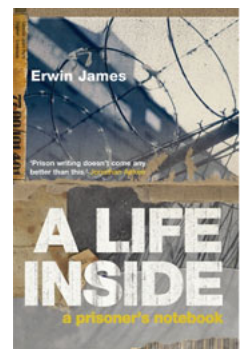
After the talk I decided to research Mr. James and found quite a long article on his life before, during and after prison - similar, but in a lot more depth, to the talk he gave to us. I would recommend reading it to those who have not heard his talk as it is a truly inspirational story (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2009/apr/24/erwin-james-journalism>).

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Erwin James spoke to the Sixth Form about prison life.

*"Mr. James was convicted of murder and served a sentence of twenty years. He is a writer for the Guardian writing articles about these controversial topics."*



A Life Inside is the story of a journey from vicious and dysfunctional youth to reformed middle age. It does not glorify crime, nor does it seek to make excuses for its author's past.

Among all of the inner demons I have always believed guilty to be the most powerful. Mr James acknowledged that much as he might wish to, he cannot undo what he has done. However, what I believe is important is that he is trying to make up for what he has done, and the fact that he is spending his life trying to make up for it is admirable. *"My behaviour was unforgivable and I seek no forgiveness now."* *"Guilt was the emotion that hit me the most powerfully, a strong sense that I did not deserve to be out here enjoying the pleasures that free people enjoy."* After a lot of reflection and meditation in prison he acknowledged his crimes and his wrong doings and swore to do good in future. Ironically I have always believed that it is those that genuinely acknowledge that they do not deserve to be forgiven for the wrong-doings they have done, are the ones

that deserve forgiveness. I have always believed in forgiveness, even for the worst crimes which is why I have always strongly opposed the 'lock them up and let them rot' approach to punishment. Although prison is a means to protect society, and a means of punishment, I have always believed that there is no greater punishment than guilt; it is a mental punishment after they have acknowledged and realised what they have done wrong, and I believe prison should provide an opportunity for criminals to reflect on what they have done.

Another thing that was touched upon by Mr. James was the use of TVs and PS3s in prison as many people believe it is a luxury that prisoners do not deserve. However Mr James brilliantly highlighted that they are merely a means to control the prisoners. By giving access

to these activities, these things can easily be taken away as a sanction. Without this, there is little ability to control the behaviour of prisoners, especially those already in prison for life. Prison is deemed the ultimate punishment so how can you sanction people that misbehave in prison? Hopefully this question will make people aware that prison really isn't a 'holiday camp' providing a more comfortable environment than they might otherwise enjoy outside of prison.

I have the utmost respect for Erwin James - not for what he has done in the past but for what he's doing now. I personally found his talk the best so far and believe he is a genuine inspiration as he can demonstrate that anyone can turn their lives around.



In this sequel to *A Life Inside*, Erwin James begins his final year of incarceration and contemplates life as a free man.

## Why are Blackberry Phones so popular with teenagers?

By Zach Emmanuel

Especially in this current period of iPhone, Android Smartphones, Windows Phone Smartphones, the question is: Why are Blackberrys still popular with Teenagers?

The most important reason Blackberry phones are popular, BBM. No one can deny that Blackberry Messenger is the best way to message your friends and family completely free of charge. It is quick, it gets the job done and there is little wrong with it; i.e. it is very good but it is not perfect. It is not perfect because it requires an internet connection which some people may not have on their contract, it only works on Blackberry phones which is sometimes a problem and sometimes it is not. It is not a problem if all your friends have Blackberrys, in fact if this is the case, you could save some money and remove texting off your monthly contract. If you were to ask 10 teenagers why

they have a Blackberry, it is very, very likely that at least 8 will say for BBM.

Also teenagers have it because of the keyboard, again no one can deny Blackberry phones have amazing keyboards, they always have and arguably they are the best keyboards on a phone. This is perfect for a sceptical teenager who is not fond of touchscreen; they can just use the keyboard. The keyboard is ideal not just for BBM, but also for E-Mails, using Facebook or just sending normal texts.

Another reason why Blackberrys are still popular is that they are far cheaper than an Android phone, especially if you are not looking for the best Blackberry out. For example, the Blackberry Bold 9900 is considered by many to be the best Blackberry (it certainly is the one the company promotes the most) and on 02, to get it

for free on contract, the cheapest price is £32 a month for 24 months. Some people just buy a Blackberry because that is what they are used to, and this could be the case for any phone, but the user has always used a Blackberry, to avoid the learning curve of a new phone, they just buy an upgraded version of their last phone. Also for a teenage student, they may just get a Blackberry for E-Mail, again no one can criticise Blackberry phones for their E-Mail, it was outstanding and still is now. So the teenager may just get a Blackberry for sending E-Mails to teachers and work colleagues.

So overall, there are several reasons why teenagers nowadays have Blackberrys: BBM, the keyboard, the cost, just because they are used to it, they just want a phone that works and the E-Mail.



*"No one can deny that Blackberry Messenger is the best way to message your friends and family completely free of charge."*