

Dear Parents/Carers

As we approach this very important time for students taking examinations, I wish to pass on some information and basic guidance to ensure that all students have a positive experience, allowing them to achieve their full potential.

Timetables

The formal summer examination season begins on Thursday 9th May 2024 with the final GCSE date being Wednesday 19th June 2024. Every student will be issued an individual copy of their summer examination timetable for their individual examination dates on the morning of the Mock Results Day on Tuesday 26th March. Occasionally it may be necessary to make amendments to these for such things as changes of tiers and, if this is the case, your child will be issued a new timetable. They will also receive some additional advice directly from the examination boards.

Contingency Day Information

As in previous years, the examination boards have included contingency sessions in the examination calendar for GCSE examinations. This is in case of any localised or national disruption occurring during the examination season affecting examinations on a particular day. Any affected examinations will be rescheduled for the afternoons of 6th & 13th June and all-day 26th June. Awarding bodies will not accept holiday as an acceptable reason for absence. Therefore, all students sitting examinations should be available on those dates. The decision to reschedule an examination will be made nationally by the awarding bodies and not by an individual school or centre.

Study Leave

Following the system established for several years pre-Covid, there is no period of Study Leave. Students are expected to attend all lessons, which continue for all subjects up to the last examination. In lessons where students have already taken the examination for that particular subject, they will obviously be able to revise for any forthcoming examinations in different subjects.

Non-Examinable Assessment Unit

Following reforms to GCSEs, some of these new specification qualifications contain a Non-Examinable Assessment unit. If this is the case, students' marks will be made known to them by their subject teachers following internal standardisation and prior to submission to the Examination Board. Once these marks have been given out, students will have a period of time to discuss this mark with their teachers and may make a formal appeal to the Examinations Officer if they are not happy with the outcome. It must be pointed out that these marks, once submitted to the Awarding Body, will then undergo an external moderation and can be subject to further change at this stage. The final mark will not be known by the Academy until results days in August.

Examination Day Information

It is vital that students are prompt for the start of both morning and afternoon examinations and arrangements have been made to ensure the security of personal belongings. Morning examinations start at 9.00am and afternoon examinations start at 1.00pm. It can disrupt other students if a candidate walks in late and the student in question will not enter the examination in a calm frame of mind to achieve their best. Please be assured even if a student is late, we would never stop them from entering an examination. However, if the student is more than one hour late, this would have to be reported to the awarding body, who will make the decision as to whether they will accept the paper.

If your child is unwell on the morning of the examination, please contact the Academy as early as possible in the morning to discuss the options. Ask to speak to either the Examinations Department or the Head of Year to ensure that we are aware of the situation.

Malpractice Regulations

Although we would not wish to think that any of our students would resort to cheating, I feel it is important that we make you aware of the consequences if this happens. The examination boards take the integrity and security of examinations extremely seriously and we are obliged to report any offences to them immediately. Students will be reminded what constitutes malpractice and what the consequences will be before the start of the examination period. The minimum that could happen is the student will lose the entire mark for that paper, but if thought serious enough, they could lose all marks for every examination under that awarding board and would have to wait the entire year to be able to retake the examination. Staff will remind students of the procedures and undertake checks to reduce the risk of banned items being taken into the examination hall. The most typical offence is taking a mobile phone into the examination room and, when prompted at the beginning of the examination, fail to hand it in. All watches also now fall into this category. All students are also reminded that defacing of papers in any way may result in the examination board refusing to mark the paper and a 'No Result' being returned for that unit. This will all be discussed more fully with students in pre-examination assemblies.

The conduct of the student during the examination is also important. We would remind students that as soon as they enter the examination room, they are under full examination conditions and any breach of this will have to be reported both to the awarding body, Head of Year and parents/carers. This means that students must be silent and must not attempt to communicate with any other student in any way, whilst in an examination room.

Results Information

Further advice will be available on Sharepoint and the website concerning results days as times for collection of results are specific to each individual Academy and will be provided to students at a local level.

GCSE Thursday 22nd August 2024.

Finally, there will be staff present in all academies on results days to offer advice for students who may need additional support and guidance on reviews of marking or progression to the next stage. I hope this letter has been useful to you, but if you have any further questions or I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully



Mrs C Ruston

Federation Examinations Manager