

*"Leaders, staff and governors share a passionate commitment to raise the aspirations and achievement of all the students who attend the school."*  
**Ofsted**

Dear Parents/Carers

As you may have seen in the news, on 7<sup>th</sup> February the exam boards published the **Advance Information** for the summer GCSE and A-Level exams. Teachers have already shared this information with students and are now formulating plans for the remainder of the year. During the pandemic, our teachers have been consistently and successfully responsive to government announcements and policies; please be assured that, as always, we are placing students' needs at the heart of our planning and are ensuring that all students are fully prepared for the summer exams.

**Optionality**

The Advance Information is in addition to the Optionality we wrote to you about several weeks ago. **Optionality** has been applied only to GCSE English Literature, GCSE History, GCSE Geography, GCSE Art and Design and A-Level Art and Design. It means that schools have the option to remove a topic from the curriculum, upon which students will not be examined. The decision about what to remove is limited to certain topics, and is made at a school level, not student-by-student. Subject teachers have informed students of these decisions and adapted the shape of the curriculum accordingly.

**Advance Information**

In order to support students at home, you may find the information on the exam board websites useful. The lists below detail which exam boards are used for each subject, accompanied by a link directly to the relevant website:

**GCSE**

AQA – click <a href="#">here</a>	Edexcel – click <a href="#">here</a>	OCR – click <a href="#">here</a>	Eduqas – click <a href="#">here</a>
English Language	Maths	Religious Studies	Media Studies
Geography	Science		
Further Maths	English Literature		
Sociology	History		
Spanish	Psychology		

**A-Level**

AQA – click <a href="#">here</a>	Edexcel – click <a href="#">here</a>	OCR – click <a href="#">here</a>
Psychology	Biology	Religious Studies (Philosophy & Ethics)
Sociology	Physics	
	Chemistry	
	English Literature	
	Geography	
	History	
	Maths	



### **Study Aids**

Exam boards published study aids (better known as Formulae Sheets) in November for Maths and Science. Students have been routinely using these in lessons since their publication, and they will be given blank copies of these sheets in their exams.

### **Grading**

Ofqual have reaffirmed their commitment to provide a “safety net” for grading this summer to reflect the disruption the KS4 and KS5 cohorts have experienced already in their course and recognise the fact that, because of the pandemic, most A-Level students won’t have taken public exams before. Results overall will be higher than in 2019, and not as high as in 2020. The exact position may vary by subject and by grade. For more information, please click [here](#). It is important that students continue to work as hard as they can to achieve the best grades regardless of what this “safety net” looks like – we must not allow ourselves a false sense of security!

### **Synoptic Exams**

Our internal synoptic exams have been amended where appropriate to reflect these announcements. The Year 13 Synoptic exams begin on 28<sup>th</sup> February; the Year 11 Synoptic exams begin on 14<sup>th</sup> March. It is important to note that the contingency plans we wrote to you about in November are still in place – please click [here](#) for more information – and as such **synoptic exams may be used as evidence to inform a Teacher Assessed Grade in the event that the Summer exams cannot go ahead.**

Again, please be reassured that the purpose of these exams is to provide high-quality feedback for students to improve their knowledge and skill. We are not conducting them for the purpose of generating evidence.

### **Summer Exams**

The Summer examination programme begins on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> May. Please note that the Contingency Day (the final date when exams could run until in the event of national delays) is Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June. We are aware that you may be planning holidays, so please ensure that Year 11 and Year 13 students are available every day up to and including this date.

### **Results Days**

A-Level Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> August

GCSE Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> August

We will write to you again with more detail regarding the upcoming Synoptic Examinations, but in the meantime may I thank you for your ongoing support as we mutually prepare all students for their next steps.

Yours sincerely



Neil Clayton  
Headteacher