



21st October 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Church Road, Lydney
Gloucestershire, GL15 5DZ

T: 01594 843202

F: 01594 842025

E: info@thedeacademy.org
www.thedeacademy.org

Richard Brand: Headteacher

Year 11 update on GCSE exams 2022, November mock exams and contingency planning

As you may have heard in recent news reports, the Department of Education have recently released their plans for GCSEs and A Levels for 2022. **Please click [here](#) to watch a short video which summarises the key information parents and students need to know.**

From the video you will see that, whilst plans are for GCSEs to go ahead, there are contingency plans that are being developed if they cannot. In light of this, schools have been advised that following October half term, work that students produce may be used as evidence should GCSE exams be replaced with Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs). This obviously places a greater emphasis on internal assessments such as end of topic tests, assessed class work and mock exams, so I wanted to take this opportunity to remind you of the support we have in place for all of our Year 11 students outside of lessons to help them prepare for these and for the external GCSE exams.

Period 6

In September we commenced a programme of Period 6 lessons after school, Monday – Thursday, 3.30 p.m.- 4.15 p.m. The purpose of these sessions is to review and reflect upon taught content, to consolidate and review learning, and to practice exam technique with a twofold intent; either to close the gap for those students who require that extra support or to challenge and extend learners who have been excelling in their studies thus far.

When students return after half term, they will be given a new period 6 timetable – bespoke to them for maximum impact. In this second phase students will be re-grouped according to their performance in their progress assessments. Using the data from the student assessments to plan these sessions allows us to provide high impact, targeted intervention to support and challenge students according to their individual needs.

Timetables for the new Period 6 sessions after half term will be sent home with students. Whilst we understand that there may be some instances where students are unable to attend Period 6 due to prior engagements, there is an expectation that students will attend; the impact that these sessions have on student progress is undeniable as evidenced by the performance of students in previous cohorts. With regards to transport, students are able to book themselves on to the late bus, or alternatively please feel free to make your own arrangements for students to return home after the sessions.

Victory Hour

In addition to Period 6, students are welcome to attend Victory Hour, which takes place every Tuesday and Wednesday from 4.15 p.m. – 5.15 p.m. and is based in the Library. This is an environment where students are able to study and revise together using resources provided by their teachers. We also provide refreshments for them.

Tutor time – “Kick Start” and Revision Techniques

In tutor time for 3 days a week, students are completing some extra Maths, English and Science “Kick Start” revision sessions that have been planned by the Directors of Faculty for each of these core subjects



and provide additional revision time and opportunities to practice exam style questions. Once a week, students are also shown how to carry out different revision techniques (such as mind maps, flash cards, highlighted notes etc...) and given the opportunity to practice them, as we are aware that being able to revise itself is a skill that students need support in developing. Balancing self-study with other schoolwork, whilst also coupling this with social/sporting activities and finding time to rest and relax, is vital and we reinforce the “little and often” approach to help students structure their time appropriately and maintain wellbeing. It is really important that the students prepare and revise fully for these mock assessments so your help in encouraging them to do so is much appreciated.

Mock examinations

The mock examinations which are completed in the hall in a more formal setting commence on the fortnight beginning 29th November and individual examination timetables for these will be sent out in due course. I have included the dates of these, along with other key dates for your calendar, below for your information.

- 4th November: Year 11 Reports sent home & Year 11 Parents’ Evening (online via SchoolCloud – [please see more information on how to book appointments in our letter here](#))
- 29th November – 10th December: Year 11 Mock Examinations
- 13th January: Year 11 Mock Results Assembly, Reports & Parents’ Evening
- 7th March – 18th March: Second Mock Examination window
- 7th April: Year 11 Results Assembly, Reports & Parents’ Evening

Finally, in a few subject areas (vocational courses) there will be external examinations taking place in January. Letters regarding these will be sent out at the start of the next term.

If you have any questions regarding the provision for your son or daughter in Year 11, please contact Hannah Rowlands, Assistant Headteacher in charge of raising standards (hannah.rowlands@thedeanacademy.org) or if you have any pastoral questions please contact Kelly Jones, Head of Year 11 (kellya.jones@thedeanacademy.org).

Many thanks for your support. We look forward to working with you to ensure success for your child this year.

Yours sincerely



Hannah Rowlands
Assistant Headteacher (Raising Standards Lead)

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