

HTS/MDU

December 2020

Please take home to Parents / Carers / Guardians

Year 11 GCSE and Cambridge National Examinations 2021

This letter contains important information about GCSE examination and non-examination assessments. Please read it carefully and keep it for future reference.

Please find enclosed with this letter the following documents:

- January 2021 trial examination timetable
- Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Information for Candidates for
 - written examinations
 - non-examination assessments
 - privacy notice
 - warning to candidates
 - social media warning

Please ensure that your son:

- Revises thoroughly before the examinations. We recommend that he starts his revision as soon as possible. You can help by providing a quiet place for him to study at home.
- Check his timetable every day to make sure he does not miss an examination.

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

Some students are entitled to extra help, known as *Access Arrangements*.

The most common form of *Access Arrangements* is extra time. This is normally granted to students whose reading and/or writing speeds are assessed to be well below average. There are, however, a range of other *Access Arrangements* available. Students with a visual impairment may have enlarged scripts or scripts in braille. Students assessed with having difficulty with concentration may have a prompter. Students with medical problems may be entitled to rest breaks. Students who are unable to write may be able to use a word processor or, if they cannot type, they may be able to use a scribe.

Most *Access Arrangements* need to be approved by examination boards several months in advance and must be supported by evidence such as an assessment by an Educational Psychologist. In general, examination boards are reluctant to approve arrangements which differ from the candidate's normal way of working. For example, if a student with writing difficulties has had this formally assessed and has been using a word processor throughout the course, then examinations board is

very likely to approve the use of a word processor during examinations. If, on the other hand, an application for the use of a word processor is made but the student has produced hand-written work throughout the course, then the examination board will be unlikely to approve the request.

It is very important that you contact Mrs Dickenson in the Additional Intervention Team as soon as possible if you think your son may be entitled to *Access Arrangements* and is not already being given extra help. If he is very slow at reading or writing, has significant difficulties maintaining concentration, or has any other problems that mean he may be entitled to *Access Arrangements* these are only likely to be approved where we have formally assessed your child's needs and arranged for appropriate help during the course. *Emergency Access Arrangements*, would be made if a significant change in the way your son worked immediately before the examination. This covers eventualities such as breaking an arm.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

Special consideration can be granted where some problem occurs **just before or during examinations** which prevents a candidate from performing to their full potential, or in exceptional circumstances from taking an examination. Special consideration is intended to compensate candidates who are unable to fully demonstrate their knowledge and skills. It is not intended to compensate candidates who have been unable to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills and therefore is not appropriate for students suffering from long term problems.

Special consideration should not be confused with *Access Arrangements*. If you are aware of a problem well before the examination, then you should contact Mrs Dickenson as soon as possible to see if *Access Arrangements* are appropriate.

If a problem occurs **just before or during** an examination, then you should contact the Exams Office immediately after the examination as we need to make a special consideration application. This must be actioned within seven days of the final examination in that subject. You will need to provide us with any supporting documentary evidence that you may have. Examination boards will only accept requests for special consideration submitted by the School.

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT APPEALS PROCEDURE

If you wish to appeal against the assessment process used for your son's non-examination assessment, then please contact Miss Duffy, the Examinations Secretary who will provide you with a copy of our Appeals Procedure.

JANUARY 2021 TRIAL EXAMINATIONS

Year 11 Trial Examinations will take place in the first week of Term 3 from Monday, 4th January 2021 to Tuesday 12th January 2021 inclusive. When not taking an examination, students attend normal lessons.

SUMMER 2021 GCSE EXAMINATIONS

Public GCSE examinations will start in mid May 2021 and continue until the beginning of July 2021.

Your son's individual summer examination timetable will be issued in January 2021. It is very important that he checks his timetable carefully for errors and to see if he is scheduled to take two (or more) examinations at the same time. If your son spots an error or examinations clash on their timetable, they must see the Examinations Secretary in the Exams Office as soon as possible. This applies to the Trial Examinations as well.

For examinations that have tiers (foundation or higher) please note that your son's examination tier may change following the results of the January trial examinations.

Please do not book any family holidays until the examination period is over. The last scheduled day for public examinations is 2nd July 2021.

CONDUCT DURING EXAMINATIONS

Students will not be allowed to take examinations unless they are dressed in school uniform in accordance with normal school rules. Mobile phones, smart watches and any devices capable of storing data or receiving messages are not allowed in the examination assessment room. These devices **must** be handed in to Student Services before the examination starts. Staff do not supervise phones and other electrical devices, which are left in the changing rooms. We do not recommend this as a safe place for them.

Please note that possession of a mobile phone or other prohibited device during a GCSE examination, even if switched off with no evidence of any attempt to use it, must be reported to the examination board. In such cases, the usual outcome is for the student to receive zero marks for that particular paper. Possession of a mobile phone during January Trial Examinations will be regarded as a serious breach of school rules and dealt with accordingly.

Students are encouraged to bring water, but it must be in a small clear plastic bottle with all labels removed. No other food or drink is allowed except by prior arrangement (for example if a candidate had diabetes). Pencil cases must be transparent; a clear plastic bag is acceptable.

Candidates must bring essential equipment such as a black pen, a pencil and ruler. Where necessary they must also bring their own mathematics equipment such as a pair of compasses and an approved calculator.

Examinations are supervised by external invigilators. We expect all students to conduct themselves appropriately before, during and after their examinations. Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported to a senior member of staff and appropriate action will be taken.

PLAGIARISM – Non-Examined Assessments

The Information to Candidates regulations state that:

“The work which you submit for assessment must be your own”.
“You must not copy from someone else or allow another candidate to copy from you”.

Teachers will issue guidance to students on the nature of plagiarised work and how to avoid copying and cheating.

If plagiarised work is discovered penalties as detailed in the attached JCQ notice will be applied to the work.

PUNCTUALITY

Students should arrive 15 minutes before the scheduled start of an GCSE or internal examination. This allows for all candidates to be seated, for instructions to be given out, for candidates to read the instructions on the front of the paper and for them to write their names and other details on the answer booklet or examination paper before the schedules start.

LEAVING EARLY

Students are not allowed to leave before the end of an examination. Candidates with extra time do not have to take the extra time but are encouraged to do so.

EXAMINATION RESULTS

Results will be issued to students Friday 27th August 2021. Students will be advised of the method of delivery which may be by secure email if COVID restrictions are still in place on site.

Results are the property of the student and as such cannot be given to family or friends without the student’s permission. If a student would like to receive their results by post they should: -

1. Give a large, addressed envelope with a large stamp to Reception before the last day of the school year. The results will be put in the post during the afternoon of 3rd September 2021.

REQUESTS FOR REVIEW OF MARKING

If a student underperforms in an GCSE examination and there is reason to believe an error was made in the marking of examinations script, then the student can apply for a review of marking for one or more scripts. There is a fee for this service per paper/unit requested, but if the review is recommended by the School then such fees are usually waived.

The student will have to sign a consent form stating that they understand that their grade could be reduced following a re-mark. This will be available on results day.

There will be a letter enclosed with the GCSE examination results explaining this procedure.

Mrs H Topping Shaw
Assistant Head Teacher (Examinations)

December 2020

To: Parents / Carers / Guardians of all students taking examinations

IMPORTANT NOTICE – MOBILE PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN EXAMINATIONS

Examination Board Regulations

The Joint Council for General Qualifications rules from their “Information to Candidates” publication that govern the administration of public examinations state that:

“You must not take into the examination room: potential technological/web enabled sources of information such as an iPod, a mobile phone, a MP3/4 player or similar device, a smartwatch or a wrist watch which has a data storage device”

Please note Ear Pods of any description are also prohibited.

This is irrespective of whether these devices are switched on or off. If a candidate is found in possession of any such devices (including inside their bag) we are obliged to report this to the awarding body. The candidate may then be disqualified from the current examination and the overall qualification.

Northampton School for Boys Arrangements

To comply with this regulation, we insist that all mobile phones (or other prohibited devices) are handed in to Student Services before **every** examination.

Mrs H Topping Shaw
Assistant Head Teacher (Examinations)