

## **Examinations Update – December 2021**

Dear Parent / Carer

I am writing to share information about your son/daughter's Trial Examinations in January 2022, and their Public Examinations in Summer 2022.

There have been several recent announcements from the Department for Education (DfE) and Ofqual (The Office of Qualifications and Examinations) linked to next summer's Public Examinations in consideration of the ongoing pandemic. Key Points from the guidance released include the following:

### **Contingency arrangements for Teacher Assessed Grades if Public Examinations for 2022 are cancelled**

As you will be aware, the 2020 and 2021 GCSE and A Levels were replaced with Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) generated within schools. We expect Public Examinations to go ahead next year, however if they were to be cancelled, all schools, in line with government guidance, would be asked to repeat a TAG process again. Under these circumstances, students would be awarded a 'Working At' TAG based on internal school assessment data. This grade would then be validated by the Awarding Bodies as a final exam grade for each subject. The Trial Exam data would be used as evidence for formulating the Teacher Assessment Grade alongside the End of Term 4 (2022) Assessment grade, any relevant coursework and a Term 5 Internal Exam grade – the Term 5 Internal Exams would only be held if Public Examinations are cancelled. Data from other End of Term tests during the course would also be considered as part of the holistic grading process.

Full details of a Teacher Assessment Grading process will only be released by the DfE to schools and parents / carers / students in the unlikely event that Public Examinations are cancelled next summer.

Ofqual has recently published an [open letter](#) to students regarding contingency arrangements and the 2022 Public Examinations which I would be grateful if you could share with your son / daughter:

### **Sharing examination question topics in advance of Public Examinations and Trial / Internal School Examinations / Assessments**

In line with the government guidance for contingency arrangements, teachers have shared or will shortly share Trial Examination topics with students. This will enable students to focus their revision on the topic areas in which they will be tested in January. Teachers will not share extensive detail, nor will they indicate which specific questions will be tested. This replicates the Public Exams process next summer, where question topic areas will be released to students in all subjects, other than GCSE English Literature, GCSE History and GCSE Geography (all three subjects already have reduced content) by each of the Examination Boards on or before February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

### **Formulae sheets for Maths, Physics and Double Science GCSE exams**

The Awarding Bodies have issued formulae sheets for Maths, Physics and Combined (Double) Science (GCSE) exam papers which students can use in the Exam Hall during the Summer Public Examinations as well as the forthcoming Trial Examinations. These sheets will be shared with students. The Examination Boards are permitting the use of these sheets so that students do not have to memorise the relevant formulae as per pre-pandemic Public Examinations.

### **Special Consideration**

In line with the government guidance for contingency arrangements, we will gather special consideration information from parents / carers / students where relevant for the Trial Examinations. Special Consideration applies to any circumstances which are outside the control of the student at the time of, or immediately before, the Trial Examinations and which adversely affect their performance – for example, illness or family bereavement. This replicates the process which will be followed for the Public Examinations in the summer. A link to an online, confidential form will be shared with students, parents / carers and teaching staff so that submissions can be made. Special Consideration is important because it provides a context to exam performance where a student may have been disadvantaged. There are details on the form itself as to what can and cannot be considered as part of this process.

### **Access Arrangements**

These will be fully in place for all relevant students during the Trial Examinations.

### **Trial Examination Absence**

Trial Examinations are vitally important for all students and attendance is mandatory other than in exceptional / emergency circumstances. Please liaise immediately with the Examinations Office over any anticipated absence due to exceptional circumstances.

### **Trial Examinations – other information**

All exam materials including a timetable, letter of explanation and the Special Consideration Form link will follow before the end of this term. Please log on to the AIM portal to access these documents – parents / carers will be notified when these are live. This is also the place where further information will be sent throughout 2022 in the months running up to the Summer. The AIM portal is also where students will find their results in August 2022.

Let me take this opportunity to wish you a restful and safe holiday. If you have any questions about examinations which are not covered by this letter, please do contact me at the school.

**Mrs H Topping Shaw**

Assistant Head Teacher (Examinations)