



28 November 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

### YEAR 11 MOCK EXAMINATIONS

Students will have been provided with the timetable for their mock exams through the Year 11 Google Classroom. There is also an AHS Candidate Exam Handbook available on the school website under [Curriculum: Exams](#). As these mock exams are run to give the students a realistic feel for their summer exams we ask students to go through this carefully with their parents so that they, and you, are fully aware of the expectations and regulations. Any students with a timetabled subject clash will receive their own personal amended timetable with the clashes resolved, via their Edulink portal. Students with resolved clashes will be **supervised between the two assessments**. They will be able to revise and prepare for the second assessment but will not be permitted access to computers or mobile phones. This is about preserving the integrity of the process for everyone and we appreciate your understanding. (Please ensure students have food and drink with them, in case they want it, during supervision). Please also discuss the need to use their legal names when completing their personal details on examination papers. This is good practice for the summer, as the awarding bodies will require the use of legal, and not preferred or chosen names, in order to produce exam certificates which are themselves legal documents.

The mock period is an important experience for students in which they can practise exam style questions in a formal setting and in timed conditions. It is never quite the same as doing tests in a classroom. It is also important that students learn how to cope with multiple exams in a relatively short period of time. The mock period is shorter than the real exam period, however, depending on which subjects students are doing, a number of exams can be very close to one another, including exam clashes, which of course we plan ahead for.

Year 11s will be on study leave during their mock exams from 8 January to 19 January, which means they are allowed to stay at home if they have no exam. Please note that students are NOT on study leave on Thursday 4 or Friday 5 January and are expected to be in school as normal. If they wish to study in school when they have no exam, there will be study rooms provided for them which must be used. A list of these will be displayed on the exams notice board daily. They will not be permitted to study in the canteen, in the library or outside on the benches. Prior to all exams, except English, Maths and Science, your daughter must sign in at reception. All students must sign out when they leave the premises after every exam. When they come in for an exam they must be in full school uniform, however their blazers will not be permitted in the exam halls and I need to remind you that there must not be any phones or watches of any kind in the exam hall. They need to arrive in good time (15 minutes before the exam begins). If a student is going to be late for an exam, due to traffic or a late bus, for example, they or you should phone reception to let the school know. If a student is ill on the day of an exam, the normal procedure should be followed and the school absence line used to report the illness. If a student misses an exam they will need to contact their subject teacher in order to arrange a suitable time to sit the missed paper(s). We are not able to offer catch up sessions in the exam venues.

Different subjects take different amounts of time to complete their marking; marking for essays



for example can take a lot longer than sticking to a right/wrong mark scheme. In the two-week period following the mocks, teachers will give back the mock papers and go through them with students, explaining total marks, grades and where improvements can be made. Most students use their grades as a means of getting into the Sixth Form. At AHS the entry requirement is 44 points and, by giving students this information after the mocks, we hope it will help them with their next steps. The results will then be sent home subsequently to parents.

It is extremely important to recognise that what students achieve in the mocks is not necessarily what they are going to achieve in the real exams. Students can realistically expect to either maintain their mock grades or to improve upon them due to a range of factors. Also, most subjects will not have finished the course content by January, but this will have happened by the real exams and students will be able to revise knowing that they have all the necessary information. After Easter, they can be almost entirely focused on revision, which in the middle of their different courses is not possible. All NEA elements will have been completed before they go on study leave and students, and parents, should take this opportunity to look at the NEA information on the website to familiarise themselves with the school NEA procedures. There are two particularly important documents when it comes to NEAs. The NEA policy can be found under the About Us: Key Information and Policies section of the website and the Internal Appeals procedure can be found under the Curriculum: Exams section of the website.

We appreciate that the exams are not long after the Christmas holidays and we would like to encourage the students to do as much work as possible prior to the Christmas break to ensure they balance the holidays with revision and having a restful break. On the 4 and 5 January, students will have dedicated taught revision sessions in each lesson. It is vital they attend these and make the most of the support teachers provide. Teachers will also be told to not set students any homework from Monday 4 December. This will allow students to focus on language oral exams, the Textiles and Art mock exam, and revision and preparation for January.

Although mock grades do not count towards the students' final GCSE grades, we have been asked to keep mock exam papers as evidence of achievement. This is in the unlikely event that we need to use them in order to calculate teacher assessed grades as we did in 2020 and 2021.

Our students still haven't yet reached the end, and there is time to progress further and develop their revision skills. This year group have had a challenging few years, and this half term has been very busy. I am incredibly proud of all of them and I have no doubt that they will achieve great things next summer. Mocks are an important learning curve, and students should embrace them confidently, seeking advice and support where needed, and ensuring they do not put too much pressure on themselves.

Whilst communicating home about mocks, I also want to make you aware of study leave dates for the Summer 24 examinations. Year 11 students' last day at school will be **Friday 3 May 2024**. More information will come out about this nearer to the time.

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mrs E Taylor, Head of Year 11