



**Magna Academy**

**Poole**

an Aspirations Academy

Principal: Ms N Ullah

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28<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Year 11

### **The current situation**

As you know, the government made the decision that schools must close to most, to limit the spread of Covid-19. Exam year students had already experienced disruption to their learning during the 2019/20 academic year and many students faced more disruption during the 2020 autumn term due to the need to self-isolate. With the loss of at least a further 6 weeks' face-to-face teaching and uncertainty about when face-to-face teaching might resume the government considers that exams cannot be held in a way which is, and which is perceived to be, fair. Although schools have taken significant steps to improve their quality of remote learning, it is nevertheless likely that a schools' ability to teach the entire curriculum and provide the usual exam preparation support will be impacted. The government also recognises that the impact of the pandemic varies between regions, between schools within a region, and from student to student according to their personal circumstances.

All year 11 students need grades to continue to the next stage of their education or training. Grades must reflect what a student knows, understands and can do. In place of exams in summer 2021 it is proposed that a student's grade in a subject will be based on their teacher's assessment of the standard at which they are performing. This will be based on a variety of factors such as; classwork in school and within Google Classroom, live lessons conducted remotely, class discussions, assessments that have taken place and will take place, and homework. It also needs to take into consideration what the student would have potentially achieved at the end of their course, had there been no disruption to their learning and they had sat their final public examinations.

The government and Ofqual are in consultation with schools and examination boards, on how year 11 'Centre Assessed Grades' will be generated by schools for their students this summer. There has been a suggestion that there may be mini exams in the summer, but we will have to wait for the results of the consultation to know exactly what we are preparing our students for. In the meantime, we will continue to work hard to ensure that students follow the curriculum and assessment patterns they would have had if they were learning in the academy.

I know many of you have worried that your opportunity to shine and to prove yourself might have been taken away, and I expect some of you might have even begun to think there is little point now in carrying on. You may even think your courses have ended. However, the government did not say there would be no exams at all (although there might not be) and they definitely did not say the work you have already done and the work you will do between now and the end of the summer will not count.

You are not in the same position as Year 11 were last year, who had finished their courses when the news came that exams were cancelled. You have not finished your GCSE or Vocational courses yet; we have not yet run all our support programmes to raise your grades before the summer (Raising Attainment programme). The period between January and May is when most students move to their highest level of academic performance. So, however you turn out to be assessed for your final GCSE and Vocational Grades, whether it is all mini exams or all teacher assessment. You still have the opportunity to influence your final grades in a massively positive way between now and the end of the summer, through the amount of work you do and the quality of it, both at home now and once you return to the academy.

### **Progress checks**

As we have not been able to conduct our Year 11 mock examinations this month, we will be carrying out a series of three 'Progress checks' over the coming months. These progress checks are to help inform your teachers of how you have been progressing in what you have been learning.

#### **Progress check 1**

The first round of progress checks will start next week. On Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February from 9am, you will have in your Google Classroom for each of your GCSE subjects a 45 minute assessment to complete. You are to complete these assessments within the 45 minute time frame, under examination conditions, with no help or support. If you are entitled to extra time, then take a further 11 minutes to complete your assessments. These assessments are to be completed and returned to your teacher using your Google Classroom. Instructions will accompany the assessment, outlining exactly how to return your completed assessment. These need to be completed no later than 3pm on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> of February. These assessments will be in addition to your live lessons, and will be part of your weekly Google Classroom work set for next week.

#### **Progress check 2**

The second round of progress checks will take place straight after February half-term. These will only take place for your GCSE subjects, during your timetabled live lessons, between Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February and Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March.

Each GCSE subject will have one progress check, which will last for 45 minutes (with 25% extra time for those students who are entitled to it). The progress check will be uploaded to your Google Classroom for the start of your live lesson, where you will be logged into the Google Meet with your camera and sound on. The progress check will be conducted under examination conditions. Your teacher will explain at the start of the session, all of the logistical aspects and expectations to you. For example, how to submit your answers. These progress checks will only cover the content that you were taught in school, when face-to-face with your teacher during the summer term. Taking advantage of what you had been revising during the Christmas break.



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## Progress check 2 timetable

| Subject            | M Band  | DC Band   |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Biology            | 22/2/2021 – Lesson 4                                  | 22/2/2021 – Lesson 2                                  |
| Chemistry          | 24/2/2021 – Lesson 2                                  | 25/2/2021 – Lesson 1                                  |
| English Language   | 22/2/2021 – Lesson 1                                  | 23/2/2021 – Lesson 3                                  |
| English Literature | 1/3/2021 – Lesson 4                                   | 3/3/2021 – Lesson 4                                   |
| French             |   | 1/3/2021 – Lesson 2                                   |
| Geography          | 22/2/2021 – Lesson 2 (E1)<br>1/3/2021 – Lesson 5 (E2) | 1/3/2021 – Lesson 2 (E1)<br>22/2/2021 – Lesson 5 (E2) |
| History            | 22/2/2021 – Lesson 2 (E1)<br>1/3/2021 – Lesson 5 (E2) | 1/3/2021 – Lesson 2 (E1)<br>22/2/2021 – Lesson 5 (E2) |
| Mathematics        | 24/2/2021 – Lesson 4                                  | 24/2/2021 – Lesson 5                                  |
| Physics            | 2/3/2021 – Lesson 1                                   | 3/3/2021 – Lesson 1                                   |
| Psychology         | 5/3/2021 – Lesson 3                                   | 5/3/2021 – Lesson 3                                   |
| Spanish            | 1/3/2021 – Lesson 5 (E2)                              | 22/2/2021 – Lesson 5 (E2)                             |
| Sociology          | 26/2/2021 – Lesson 1                                  | 26/2/2021 – Lesson 1                                  |

## Progress check 3

The final progress check will take place from Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March to Friday 30<sup>th</sup> April. The timetable for these assessments will be communicated after February half-term.

## Vocational courses

Due to the nature of the vocational subjects comprising of a significant amount of coursework and that the coursework will be externally moderated by the examination boards, students studying vocational subjects will not have progress checks in these subject areas. Therefore, it is vitally important to understand that the quality on completion of your coursework is extremely important in determining the final grades that you will receive for vocational subjects.

## Effective revision support

In preparation, thorough revision is essential if students are to be successful in any assessment. We recommend that revision is completed over an extended period of time to give the best possible experience and outcome.

Before Christmas students received a printed, 'Guide to Effective Revision'. This guide gives useful advice about the best ways for students to revise, along with helpful tips and information for parents/carers. From Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February, students will have access to the 'Effective Revision' Google Classroom. The page will include a variety of resources and instructional video clips to complement the 'Guide to Effective Revision' content. Content includes: The forgetting curve and RAG personalised learning checklists (PLCs), effective learning strategies and revision techniques, dealing with stress and anxiety, revision timetables, advice for parents/carers and links to useful resources.

In support, subjects have uploaded revision material directly onto their subject Google Classroom pages. During the weekly live pastoral sessions, tutors will be introducing students to the effective revision concepts. This training and support will be invaluable post Year 11, when you embark on your next steps.



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## Finally

We plan to provide all Year 11 students and their families an update as to how you are all progressing within each of your subjects before Easter. We will therefore upload to Progresso before Easter an updated subject report for each of you. Your parents/carers will be able to login and see the latest progress report for you. This will outline the current grade that you are working at for each of your subjects, these are not your final centre assessed grades.

You are learning at home, but your courses are not finished, and you will still massively influence your final grade in each subject by the quality and amount of work you do, no matter how it ends up being assessed in the summer. I will of course continue to communicate updates when exact guidance and policy is known.

Yours sincerely,



Mr A Potter  
Vice Principal