



12th November 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Year 11 GCSE Specification Examination Changes, mock examinations and how best to support your child

Due to the unforeseen and unprecedented lockdown from March to September, several examinations have made changes to their examination requirements to ensure all pupils are provided with appropriate and fair examination content.

The changes are summarised in the table below. Where a subject is not referenced, this is because there have been no changes to the specification or examination:

Subject	Changes
English Literature	<p>Schools will now have a free choice of any two of the following three areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Anthology of poetry● Modern text● 19th century novel. <p>Shakespeare and unseen poetry will still be compulsory. After considering the course content that has already been delivered, we have decided to focus on the anthology of poetry (Love and Relationships) and the modern text: An Inspector Calls. Pupils will not continue to study on the 19th century novel 'Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde' and we advise that they do not choose this text to respond to in the GCSE English Literature exam in 2021.</p>
Science	<p>Students can study the required practical activities through demonstrations and simulations if it is not possible to carry them out in person. However, we still recommend doing them in person where possible. Students can watch all of the required practicals on Youtube through the channels shared on Show My Homework. Educake also has a summary of each required practical with the method and example results, for students to interpret.</p>
French	<p>The speaking exam has been removed and replaced with a speaking endorsement (pass, merit, distinction) to sit alongside, but not contribute towards, their overall 9-1 grade. In the writing exam, there will be a choice of 3 90 word tasks (previously 2) at foundation and higher. There will also be a choice of 3 150 word tasks (previously 2) at higher tier. The writing examinations at foundation and higher tier will be lengthened by 5 minutes</p>
PE GCSE	<p>Two practical activities to be assessed as opposed to three. All moderation of the practical component must take place via video as opposed to a visit by a moderator.</p>
PE Cambridge National	<p>Assessed via three units as opposed to four.</p>



Drama	<p>Component 1 There are new regulatory minimum timings in place for all performance routes. An audience can be a small live or virtual live streamed one, but must include the teacher. There will be the option of monologue and duologue for performance/design realisation, so therefore group work is not compulsory. Final outcomes can differ from intended pre-Covid outcomes in the portfolio.</p> <p>Component 2 Performance/design realisations will be done for one key extract only, rather than two. There are new regulatory minimum timings in place for all performance routes and therefore the penalty tables have been changed to reflect these new minimum timings. An audience can be a small live or virtual live streamed one, but must include the teacher. This component will be assessed by an examiner via recorded evidence rather than by visiting examiner.</p> <p>Component 3 The live theatre requirement can be satisfied through live streamed, digital or recorded performances.</p>
Music	Students only have to submit one performance and one composition, instead of two performances and two compositions. They can choose which type of performance and composition to submit.
Art	They will not be receiving Component 2 which is an externally set assignment set in January and completed in April. Instead they will be continuing with portfolio "catch up" projects.
Geography	The changes made relate to paper 3 and the field work element. Students are no longer required to complete two occasions of fieldwork and there will be no questions about the student's own fieldwork experience in the exam. The total number of marks available for the 8035/3 paper will reduce from 76 to 56 marks. The total time allocation for the 8035/3 paper will reduce from 1 hour 15 minutes to 1 hour.
History	<p>GCSE History students will only have to answer questions on three out of four studies. There will be a mixture of compulsory and optional studies. The compulsory study will be the wider world depth study (Paper 1, Section B). Students will also answer questions on two out of the other three optional studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● the period study (Paper 1, Section A)● the thematic study (Paper 2, Section A)● the British depth study with the historic environment (Paper 2, Section B).



	<p>The compulsory wider world depth study we have chosen is the German Depth Study 1890-1945. The optional studies we have chosen are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The thematic study - Britain, Health and the Nation.• The period study is Conflict and Tension (1918-1939). <p>In normal years, students have four hours of total exam time for GCSE . This year students will have three hours of exam time.</p>
Food and Nutrition	<p>The non-exam assessment (NEA) is amended. Pupils are required to do NEA 2 only but the weighting will be worth 50% instead of 35%. As part of the NEA 2, pupils will be required to make 2 dishes in 3 hours practical exam instead of the usual 3 dishes. The NEA 1 (Usually worth 15%) is removed for this year.</p>
Design and Technology (Resistant Materials and Textiles)	<p>Realising design ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This section has been reduced from 20 to 10 marks• Students will no longer be assessed on the skill of making but will be required to show their 'intentions of prototypes' and demonstrate their understanding of the processes involved in making• The assessment no longer requires students to make a final prototype - instead, they can show their understanding of the processes involved in making by writing about them. <p>Analysing and evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This section has been reduced from 20 to 15 marks• Analysis and evaluation throughout the design process can take place in relation to prototype ideas and models• There's no expectation to test a final made prototype but students should find ways of testing prototype designs.
BTEC Travel and Tourism	<p>Year 11 exams are as normal with resit opportunities. Centre Assessed Grades for controlled assessment have been submitted for both DIT components and one Travel component - we are just awaiting final approval.</p>

Should you require any further subject-specific information, please contact the relevant Head of Faculty. Email addresses can be found on our school website.



How to support your child: catch up sessions, use of revision plans and the mock examination timetable

We appreciate as a school that this is an unsettling and stressful time for our Year 11 students. In addition to our normal programme of teaching and learning, and the lessons provided on Zoom for students who are isolating, there are a number of ways in which you can support the school's provision for your child:

- Encourage your child to follow their revision plans carefully in the build up to the mock examination timetable - **all revision plan activities will with be checked or marked within school**
- Talk to your child about their revision, and remind them to use some of the Vespa strategies which they have covered in form time and lessons
- **The mock examinations are extremely important for your child.** They provide an excellent practice for the actual GCSE examination series. **Moreover, with the current uncertainty about the examination series in 2021, in the event of the school having to provided centre-assessed grades the mock examinations will form a key part of teacher assessment of a pupil's final grade**
- Encourage your child to attend the weekly catch up sessions provided by the school in all subjects
- Stay aware of what your child is studying - read the recent letter sent out about what your child is studying in the curriculum this half term
- Emphasise the importance of Zoom lessons if pupils are isolating, and stress to your child why it is important that they continue to put in maximum effort both in school and at home

Finally, remind your child to carry on doing the basic things that they have been doing since Year 7:

- Review your work regularly - read through it, mind maps, flash cards etc
- Get a good night's sleep and turn of all devices in advance of going to sleep
- Check Show My Homework every evening - prioritise your work, and try to do as much work as possible on the day that it has been set
- Pack your bag the night before - stay organised
- When working and revising, use the Pomodoro Technique - work in chunks of 25 minutes and give yourself regular breaks

Yours faithfully

Dr S Guscott
Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum and Pastoral)