



Ref: DJB/AB 12 February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer/Student,

**Re: Revised Year 13 Spring Assessments: 8<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

Whilst we are anticipating that School will reopen on Monday 8 March, there is still uncertainty around this and the return date may yet be subject to change; however, in order to provide pupils with time to prepare we have drafted the Spring assessment timetable which supersedes the former mock examination timetable. Should the situation change we will inform you as soon as possible.

I have attached a copy of the Spring assessment timetable. The timetable has had some minor changes from the original mock timetable. Whilst some students have asked if the exams can be delayed to allow a period of in-school teaching first, the likelihood of students having to isolate owing to track and trace requirements, thereby missing some or all of the scheduled assessments, will increase day-by-day once pupils return. For this reason, and to allow maximum teaching time post-exams for course completion, we believe it is in everyone's best interests to run the exams at the earliest opportunity once pupils are able to return. For courses in which there is a pre-existing NEA deadline, for various reasons these deadlines must remain in place.

Please be aware also that many lessons after half term in the build up to the planned Spring assessments will focus on exam preparations (including revision, practice and study of technique); as previously, only content covered up to the Christmas holiday will be assessed (i.e. no new content since the January lockdown). No homeworks will be set on new content during this period. As a school, we share a strong common interest with students and parents alike in ensuring that the assessment and qualifications process is conducted fairly and with integrity, and in enabling our pupils to perform with confidence to the high levels that Olavian students should and would normally aspire to.

As a school we appreciate that there is much speculation and some understandable concern around the role that these assessments may play in determining teacher assessments and A-Level outcomes in the summer; the school only knows as much as is already in the public domain and we are expecting clarification on this following the outcome of the Department for Education's consultation on "How GCSE, AS and A level grades should be awarded in summer 2021". Please be assured that whilst these assessments are no doubt important assessments and will be a key piece of data for the school, they will not be the only assessment data on which the school draws. These exams are not direct proxies for the actual A-Level exams, and we anticipate from what has already been shared that the school will be able to draw on other types of assessment data, including IPMS, NEA material etc. We will update pupils and parents concerning the process as soon as we are able to. Subject teachers will be offering a wealth of guidance and support, and will be keen to assist pupils in whatever way they can with their preparations. Beyond the academic guidance offered by subject teachers, there is a lot of support available in school for pupils via their Form Tutors, their Head of Year team and their peers. If you have any pastoral concerns please contact Mr Haines, Mr Jewson or the relevant Form Tutor.

**Arrangements**

Please read the summary of arrangements accompanying this letter; all Year 13 pupils need to be familiar with these. Assessments will run from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March to Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March and students will only be required to come into school on days when one or more of their subject assessments is/are running. Those studying A-Level Art will have NEA catch-up days on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March and Art students will not attend other subject lessons during this period. All non-Art students will return to normal timetabled lessons on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March.



Throughout the exam period, pupils must ensure that they come to school wearing the correct uniform as outlined in the Sixth Form Uniform Policy. Whilst the school will be heated, due to the size of and need for good ventilation, some venues may be cold and we suggest pupils wear a jumper and/or a vest. Pupils will be permitted to wear a coat if they wish.

Most of the assessments will start at either 9:45am or 1.45pm (the exception is Monday 8 March where the start time is 10:15am). Students are required to be in the PA Quad **at least 10 minutes before the start of an assessment**. Students who are entitled to exam access arrangements will be based in the Main School Library and will meet 10 minutes before the start of an examination under the Chapel. We will individually notify students who are entitled to exam access arrangements.

If there are any circumstances that we are unaware of (or that occur immediately prior to or during the assessment window) which you believe would have a significant impact on your/your son's/daughter's assessment performance, please contact Mrs. Dixon [examsofficer@saintolaves.net](mailto:examsofficer@saintolaves.net). If a pre-scheduled University interview clashes with an assessment, please contact Mrs. Dixon in advance.

I would like to emphasise that it is important that you remain vigilant and should you/your son/daughter display COVID symptoms, you/he/she must not come into school to ensure the safety of other students and to ensure that self-isolation of large groups does not undermine the assessments.

To the parents/carers: please encourage and support your son/daughter to prepare fully for these assessments. A good set of results will boost their self-confidence and allow teachers to ensure the remaining lessons can be used efficiently to maximise performance for any further assessment points in the summer, as well as to ensure full course coverage which will support them in their future learning beyond A-Level.

To the pupils themselves – please do make sure you take some time to take stock and recharge yourselves during the half term break. Remember to be (or to get) in good habits in terms of eating and sleeping regularly and sensibly; a healthy body and routines will help you to perform to your best. Remember that you will already have undertaken considerable revision for the mock exam series which will stand you in good stead for these assessments, and that whilst they are important and should be taken seriously, they are not the same as an actual A-Level exam. This assessment series is a formal opportunity to demonstrate that you can perform at a high standard and put forward strong additional evidence to support your teachers' assessments of your work.

We wish all members of the year group every possible success in these forthcoming assessments.

Yours sincerely

Mr D J Budds  
Deputy Headteacher