



AMPLEFORTH
COLLEGE

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

I am pleased to introduce myself to you as the Head of Middle School (Years 9 to 11). I will be assisted by Mr Hugh Ainscough, who will have a focus on Year 9. I would like to take the opportunity to give you a brief overview of the Year.

A focus in Year 11 is naturally the (I)GCSE public examinations, which will begin in May, and the completion of the Enterprise & Marketing vocational course. Much of my overview will focus on how we will prepare our students for public examinations and to help them reach their full academic potential. As I discussed with the Year 11 students in our Assembly on Tuesday, the public examinations need not be at the expense of cocurricular activities. Students can flourish both in terms of academic studies and co-curricular activities.

Students can expect to have a 1-to-1 meeting with their tutor once per week. We understand that Year 11 can be a demanding time for your daughters and sons. Tutors and House Parents will ensure the wellbeing of each student. Tutors will also monitor the academic progress of each student and give them personalised targets and goals to ensure they progress well in all aspects of Ampleforth life. Open and effective communication is key to a successful partnership between school and home. Tutors will, if they have not already, be in contact to introduce themselves to you and will continue to be a point of contact throughout the year and ensure you are kept informed of your daughters' and sons' progress.

Revision and Holiday Work

How students use the time they are away from Ampleforth in Year 11 will contribute and add to the education and preparation they gain whilst at school. Students will of course also need a break from their studies to spend valuable time with family and friends. Please see below a brief summary of approximately how much time students should spend working per holiday. The below are only approximate guidelines. Through their personal tutors, revision plans will be tailored for each student. Please also use the link below if you wish to access some of the revision resources we are giving to our students. This is a live link which will be updated throughout the year.

Link to revision resources: [☐ Year 11 Subject Revision Resources](#)

Autumn Half Term: Students should spend some time completing any NEA (Non-Examined Assessments, formerly known as coursework) work. This will not be a holiday requiring intensive revision, but some work is required.

Christmas Holiday: Students will need to spend two out of the three-week period revising in preparation for their Mock examinations (which commence on the first day of the Lent Term). Christmas is also an important time to spend with family. Tutors will discuss student revision plans in their 1-to-1s to ensure they get the correct balance between work and relaxation.

February Half Term: We advise that most students take this time as a break. It will be their last opportunity for a substantial period away from their studies and it will mitigate the chances of students peaking too early in their efforts.

Easter Holiday: Students should aim to revise at least five hours per day, taking the weekends and bank-holiday off as a break. Tutors will discuss with students how to best organise their time and form a tailored plan. Public examinations will begin 4th May, only two and a half weeks after our students return from Easter.

May Half Term: This holiday falls approximately in the middle of the public examinations. The Exhibition weekend provides a good opportunity for students to socialise and relax. But the majority of this break will need to be spent revising and preparing for their final public examinations. It is worth noting that most students will return with only three weeks of exams remaining until they can take a break over the summer period.

Mock Examinations

Mock examinations will start on 8th January 2025. The examinations will run for one week. Timetabling the mock examinations is a compromise between reducing the duration of time students are out of lessons and simulating the actual public examinations in the Summer. As a consequence, students will get more Mock examinations in a single week than they should expect in the public examinations. As in the public examinations, students can expect to have up to three Mock exam papers in a single day, although we do try to avoid this occurring too frequently. Students should expect to get the same access arrangements (e.g. extra time, scribe etc) as they would in the public examinations. Students will also get an extended assessment at the end of the Autumn Term in English and Maths to allow students to trial (and perhaps tweak) their access arrangements ahead of the Mock Exams.

The timing of our Mock examinations is later than some schools, as our Year 11 Mock examinations are our students second formal off-timetable GCSE assessment. In the Summer Term of Year 10 our students sat a formal series of examinations, for which they were off-timetable and completed GCSE questions. Our Mock examinations are also complemented by our regular series of in-class assessments, which are typically sat once per half term.

Revision lists for Mock examinations will be released in November. Unlike past in-class assessments, these lists will be less detailed and more “broad-strokes” in nature. This is to better prepare students for the public examinations where any content on their course specifications can be examined.

Year 11 Parents’ Retreat and Parents’ Day

Parents’ Day Retreat is Friday 30th January, with Parents’ Day following on Saturday 31st. The timing of Parents’ Day is to coincide with the completion, marking and feedback of Mock examinations. Year 11 Mock results will be released ahead of Parents’ Day so they may be discussed with teachers and tutors. Sixth Form choices are also commonly discussed at Parents’ Day.

Student Progress Meetings

Following the release of the Mock examination results, Mr Devitt (Deputy Head Academic) and I will have a formal meeting with every student in Year 11. During these meetings we will discuss results with students and any patterns in their grades. Bespoke advice will be given on how to increase attainment. Where needed, extra intervention will also be put in place at end of the Progress Meetings. We know from past cohorts that most students will make a significant gain in attainment

between their Mock examination results and their actual GCSEs. The Student Progress Meetings are to supplement the regular 1-to-1 meetings all students will get with their personal tutor.

Sixth Form Choices

We start the discussions on Sixth Form choices this term. Students have already had a talk from our Head of Careers, Mr Hall, as part of their induction day on Tuesday (2nd September). On Saturday 8th November, students will have a Sixth Form options morning. During this time students will be able to discuss Sixth Form options with Heads of Departments. An initial poll will be gathered so we can judge the interests of our current students. 13th March is the Higher Education Conference (HEC). This is a day where students will focus on their careers and attend seminars delivered by visiting academics and professionals. 7th March, students will attend Sixth Form taster lessons. Students will select a series of short lessons they would like to attend, in order to better understand what each Sixth-Form course involves. 20th March is the deadline for students to make their "*final*" Sixth Form choices. It is worth noting that we do anticipate that many students will change their Sixth Form choices upon receipt of their GCSE results. These changes we aim to accommodate as best we can.

Public GCSE Examinations

Public examinations will begin in earnest on the week commencing 4th May (students taking Art will sit their examination before this date), they will run through into June. Students will be provided with individual timetables of their public examinations. These will also be added to the Portal. Students are not typically granted extended examination leave during the GCSE examinations. GCSE Students perform best when they remain in school, where we provide them with much subject-based support right up until their last examination. There is also the pastoral support they will gain from their House-team and from each other. We typically operate a recall timetable, where students are placed in extra lessons for the subjects that are imminently due to be examined.

GCSE Contingency Date

24th June is the GCSE contingency date. Most students are expected to have completed their public examinations before this date, some a week or two before. But 24th June is held, nationally, as a contingency. Should a significant matter disrupt the sitting of public examinations, then this date can be used for the completion of any examinations that were disrupted. Therefore, we caution against booking any holidays or similar before this date.

I look forwards to guiding our Year 11 students throughout this academic year and to celebrate in their successes in the Summer. If I can be of any help throughout the year, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Oliver Beveridge

Dr Oliver Beveridge
Head of Middle School