



Dear Parents and Guardians,

I would like to take the opportunity to summarise two key points about Year 11: the Sixth Form options process and preparation and arrangements for the Mock Exams.

Year 11 Sixth Form options process

The atmosphere on 9th November for the Year 11 Sixth Form Options Day was excellent. The students were fully engaged with the event and had some excellent discussions with Heads of Departments about the wide array of Sixth Form options at Ampleforth. I realise that many parents could not make this day, so [click here](#) for our Sixth Form Options booklet.

Please do note that at this stage we are not asking our Year 11 students to make a commitment to their Sixth Form Options, these decisions we will ask them to make by 15th March. By this point, all students would have received the grades from their Mock Exams. There will be an opportunity for discussion about final Sixth Form options at the Year 11 Parents' Day, 24th February. Students will also have Sixth Form taster lessons on 8th March, to try those courses they are considering. All students have already had the opportunity to discuss their initial thoughts for Sixth Form with their tutors and Heads of Department. We have also taken a "straw-poll" of our students' potential options, merely for administrative purposes and to allow the Deputy Head Academic to put together our Sixth Form options blocks. Sixth Form option blocks will be published to parents shortly, to allow discussion over the Christmas holidays. Year 11s have also had an introductory talk on Sixth Form options by Richard Hudson, the Head of Year 12.

Finally, it is worth noting that whilst we are asking our students to make Sixth Form option choices and submit them next term, these choices are not "written in stone". It is quite common for students to reevaluate their options, particularly during the summer once they receive their GCSE results.

Year 11 Mock Exam Preparation

Year 11 Students will sit their GCSE Mock Exams in the week commencing 22nd January. The exams will be sat over an eight-day period, with a break from Saturday afternoon to Monday morning. Year 11 students will be off-timetable during this period. Results of the Mock Exams will be discussed with students ahead of the Year 11 Parents' Day. Mock Exams will be conducted under the same conditions as the public exams in summer.

In preparation for the Mock Exams, we have had a whole school-strategy to use the start of lessons to encourage recall and revision of work conducted in Years 9 and 10, and to integrate this work into their current topics. Subject-specific revision skills have also been modelled during lessons or prep time. Students have also had two short assessments per subject this term, where they have sat GCSE questions under test conditions. After each assessment tutors discuss the results with their tutees and where necessary recommend strategies to improve attainment. I also analyse the results of these assessments and meet with and put in place interventions for those students that are struggling.

Students are aware that they will need to spend a substantial period of the Christmas break preparing for their Mock Exams. Each subject has provided a guide on what they may expect in their Mock Exams, these are also attached to this message. These guides are more broad strokes than fine detail, to encourage students to review the full breadth of the course. The guidance we are giving students

is to spend approximately two out of the three-week period preparing for their Mocks. All students will have a good sense of what effective revision is. Students and their tutors have discussed revision plans.

Finally, students will have one and a half weeks of lessons after Christmas before their Mock Exams. Clearly this too is an important time for revision. The most effective students will use this time to request support and guidance on those topics they reviewed over the Christmas period but still do not fully understand.

After the Mock Exam results have been published, all students will attend a meeting to discuss their grades with a senior member of staff. This is in addition to a 1-to-1 tutorial with their tutor.

Finally, I would like to take the opportunity to wish you and your family a very merry Christmas.

Yours sincerely

Oliver Beveridge