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4th November 2021

Dear Parents & Guardians of Year 11 Students

Summer 2022 Exams Contingency Plans and Assessment Adaptations

We wrote to you last half term outlining important information regarding the summer 2022 exam adaptations, mock exams and revision. As promised we are now writing again to summarise the information you need to be aware of with regards to:

- Assessment Adaptations in GCSE English Language, History and Geography
- Contingency plans in the event of a cancellation of the summer exams

Adaptations to English Language GCSE

We have taken the decision that Arden students will not be examined in the poetry anthology. This is an important and diverse element of the course but, as pupils need to learn the fifteen poems from memory plus the context of each, we can better utilise revision time to focus on completing and revising the remaining elements of the two courses.

To summarise, the two English Language exams are unchanged:

- **Language Paper 1:** Unseen 19th Century Fiction and Imaginative Writing
- **Language Paper 2:** Unseen 20th and 21st Century Non-fiction and Transactional Writing

The Literature exams are now as follows:

- **Literature Paper 1:** Shakespeare (Macbeth) and the modern play (Journey's End by R C Sherriff)
- **Literature Paper 2:** 19th Century Novel – All pupils have studied A Christmas Carol and this will be the only text examined in this exam.

Adaptations to History GCSE

Arden students will not be examined on the Paper Two content of **Superpower Relations and the Cold War, 1941-91** element of the course in the summer. This is an important and topical element of the course, however this decision will enable students to focus on the other elements of the course.

To summarise, the other papers remain the same and are:

- **Paper 1:** (Option 11) Medicine in Britain c1250–present and the British sector of the Western Front, 1914–18: injuries, treatment and the trenches
- **Paper 2:** (Option B4) Early Elizabethan England, 1558-1588
- **Paper 3:** (Option 30) Russia and the Soviet Union, 1917–41



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Adaptations to Geography GCSE

As it has been difficult for all students across the country to complete fieldwork during the COVID pandemic, all questions relating to this part of the course have been removed by all exam boards for all students. These questions are referred to as 'familiar' fieldwork questions. Questions on 'unfamiliar fieldwork' will remain. This reduces the amount of marks for spelling punctuation and grammar from 9 to 6, and reduces the length of Paper 3.

Additionally, in Paper 2, Arden students will not be examined on Section B: The changing economic world. They will instead be examined on Section C: The challenge of resource management. Historically Arden students have performed well on Section C and our students are already experienced with the style of exam question in this section

To summarise

- **Paper 1:** Living with the physical environment - unchanged
- **Paper 2:** Challenges in the human environment - will include questions on Urban Issues and Resource Management only
- **Paper 3:** Geographical applications - reduced in length and will not contain questions on student 'familiar' fieldwork

Contingency plans if examinations are cancelled

Ofqual have confirmed that if exams are cancelled, grades will be determined through teacher assessment - Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs). The full details of their proposal, and their reasoning for this decision, are available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/contingency-arrangements-gcse-as-a-level-project-and-aea/contingency-arrangements-gcse-as-a-level-project-and-aea>

We have already spoken to all Year 11 students, in an assembly, about these contingency plans.

Schools have been asked, by Ofqual, to plan assessment opportunities for TAGs in advance. They state that the timetable of assessments should include the opportunity to gather some evidence early in the academic year, for example, before Christmas. This will protect against further disruption that may happen in 2022. These assessments should provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding across the full range of content that they have been taught. Ofqual suggests that a sensible pattern could be to plan to assess students once in each of the second half of the autumn term, the spring term, and the first half of the summer term.

Assessments for Year 11 already take place in the autumn term in the form of the mock examinations. Hence we will be using these assessments as part of the portfolio of evidence we would use, in the event of the summer examinations being cancelled.

This link will take you to a collation of the revision lists for the mock examinations:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/19TCfWDXrGk1PnXfKLOgAqO23XvYqvTQODHKyPpwukbc/edit>

This collation of revision lists is a work in progress, so please check back again in a couple of days for any missing subjects. Students will also receive copies from their subject teachers, via Edulink and/or Google Classroom. We will also provide them with a completed summary on Edulink.

Please be assured that providing revision lists, making it very clear to students which assessments 'count' towards TAGs and keeping the assessments relatively short, are a deliberate measures, to allow Arden students to do as well as they possibly can.

The format and timing of the additional assessments in the spring and summer terms will depend slightly on the outcome of these assessments and the progression of the pandemic. We have a provisional plan in place and will share further details with you closer to the time.

FAQs about the contingency plans

This list of answers to a set of FAQs has been compiled to help address any questions that you may have:

This sounds like a lot of assessments?

It is no more than we would need to do normally. Teachers assess student progress regularly over the duration of a course. The only difference is that some of them will now happen in the School Hall/Gym rather than in the classroom. In a normal school year the amount of hours spent assessing pupils would be more than the total hours contributing to TAG assessments. This will also be the case this year, as teachers will need to carry out other classroom based assessments.

My child will perform better in real exams than in the mocks. Is this process disadvantageous to them?

The level of performance in an assessment is usually due to the amount of work put into the revision and preparation for the assessment. We always encourage all students to work as hard for mocks and other internal assessments as they would for 'real' assessments. Revision lists will help them focus their revision. The TAG assessments will cover a much smaller proportion of the course than real assessments, which will help students to do well.

What if my child misses a TAG assessment?

We will allow them to complete the assessment once they return to school. If that is not possible then we are able to look for alternative evidence, or, failing that, make a judgment on the information we do have.

Will you be giving out TAG assessment grades?

No, we are not able to do so. We will provide feedback and students will be able to see their marks. However Ofqual will not permit schools to release TAG grades or the grades of individual TAG assessments prior to the August results day

How will you know the assessments have been correctly marked?

The marking of all TAG assessments will undergo standardisation and moderation. This will also include standardisation of marking using expertise from other schools in the Trust.

It sounds like these assessments will be used to make TAG judgements, inform predicted grades, be practice for real exams, and provide teachers and students with feedback. How can an assessment be used for more than one purpose?

It is completely normal and a standard part of teaching that the data from an assessment and the action of completing the assessment serves many purposes.

I don't agree with these contingency plans for replacing exams, can I complain to the school?

These arrangements have not been determined by Arden. They are based on the guidance issued by Ofqual in October. They provided a period of consultation where

parents, teachers and students could pass on their point of view. If you would like to read the full consultation it is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/contingency-arrangements-gcse-as-a-level-project-and-aea/contingency-arrangements-gcse-as-a-level-project-and-aea#consultation-arrangements>

Ofqual have their own complaints procedure should you wish to raise any concerns with them:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual/about/complaints-procedure>

Summary

Despite all the planned arrangements and information in this letter, it is worth noting that **we do expect examinations to go ahead this summer 2022 as planned**. The work that we are putting into the contingency planning simply means that we are fully prepared for that, albeit unlikely, scenario. If examinations are cancelled we will do all we can to ensure our students receive a fair and accurate grade that accurately reflects their performance in each subject.

Yours sincerely



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