

HIGH STANDARDS, HIGH ASPIRATIONS, HIGH EXPECTATIONS

7th June 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

Year 10 Newsletter – June 2023

I hope this newsletter finds you well as we enter the final term of this academic year and hopefully enjoying some slightly warmer weather. As previously communicated, all of Year 10 will have mock exams this term and I wanted to write to you to provide some more information now that the mock exam timetable has been finalised, in order to help you support your child.

Mocks: 19th June – 6th July

The window for written mock exams will begin on Thursday 22nd June and run until Thursday 6th July. In addition to this, those students that study Photography or Art will complete a practical day in those subjects prior to this as shown on the mock timetable I have attached alongside this newsletter.

This mock window does feature more exams than students sat in Term 3, as the idea is that we gradually build it up so that they gain the skills and experience required across the two years. Therefore, students will sit exams in most of their subjects this time. On the mock timetable, I have highlighted the exams that are for the whole year group in green. The rest will depend on the subjects that your child studies so while it does look a lot in total, it is important to identify with your child which exams they will be sitting and when. I have also cross-referenced and planned the timetable so that no student should be sitting more than two exams on any one day. Should you find this is not the case, please do contact me as soon as possible so that we can support with this. Please also note that while we have tried to keep exams within the academy day, if your child sits the Higher tier German paper, they will on one day run slightly over 3pm, ending around 3.15pm.

I have talked to students about the importance of mock exams, as I appreciate they put a significant demand on students and we dedicate significant time to them. The reason for this is the value they bring in students building their experience of exams and the skills and knowledge required, as well as giving teachers an important insight into your child's strengths and areas for development. All I ask is that students do their best which gives a true reflection of how they are getting on and the progress they are making, so that we can effectively support them moving forward and help them to achieve their full potential. Please reassure your child that this is an opportunity to support them and the more they effort they give to this, the more they will get out of it in the long-term.

Wellbeing

GCSE years inevitably bring periods of increased levels of stress and anxiety as we know students care deeply about their achievement and qualifications are challenging. Mock exams are a point at which students can experience this, and due to the constraints of having to fit them into a short space of time, we appreciate this can be a busier time for students than their final exams even, where they will be more spread out. By building in these mock windows throughout the two years, this should reduce the stress that is placed on students when it comes to the end of Year 11 and they can sit their final exam confidently and feeling well-prepared. Simple ways that you can support your child's wellbeing from home include:

- Creating a quiet space for them to work and revise.

HIGH STANDARDS, HIGH ASPIRATIONS, HIGH EXPECTATIONS

- Ensuring they have regular breaks.
- Encouraging them to get enough sleep every night so they are refreshed in the morning.
- Check they are eating regularly and healthily.
- Seek opportunities for your child to participate in activity, exercise or just get out in the fresh air.

Revision Timetables

To further support with their wellbeing, I have talked students through how to prepare and plan for their mocks using a revision timetable template. If they have not already brought this home to show you, please do ask them and support with this if needed. Key things for them to bear in mind when planning their revision include:

- Smaller manageable chunks of time dedicated to revision, with regular breaks included.
- Remember to include other commitments such as sports, family time, etc.
- Including all subjects across the week with multiple opportunities to focus on each subject – ‘little and often’.
- Making it achievable with some downtime so that students don’t burn out.
- Adding further detail about what they will be revising for each subject and when e.g. topics.

I will also be offering students the opportunity and space to revise independently after school from Monday 12th June until Wednesday 21st June after school from 3pm until 4pm. This will be collectively as a year group with myself or another member of the senior leadership team. During written exams (22nd June onwards), students are then invited in from 7.30am to revise in the main street if they so wish.

Every mock window is an opportunity to develop these skills and being able to make and stick to a plan is crucial for students in managing any anxiety they may feel about sitting exams. The more prepared they are, the more confident and calm they are likely to feel both in the run up to exams and when entering the exam hall.

Maths

Mock exams will vary in length and number depending on the subject and, for the majority of subjects, exams will only assess content that has already been taught this year. The only exception to this is in Maths, where students will sit the three full papers as they will in Year 11. They will do this in every mock window, to give students the chance to apply their skills across the range of questions in each paper, and also enable our Maths team to track their progress across the two years. It is expected that students will achieve a lower score at this point but that we will see a gradual increase in each mock window that can be tracked and used to inform teaching practice.

Eco Day

Friday 23rd June is our academy Eco-Day. While this coincides with two mock exams (English Language and Languages Writing paper), students will still be permitted to wear non-school uniform alongside the other year groups. We are looking at building in some time outside if possible between the two exams to tie in with Eco Day. I hope this will also provide an opportunity for them to retain some physical activity/fresh air during the exam period, to support their wellbeing. Please note that for all other days, full uniform is required for all exams and will be checked as students enter the hall.

Careers Week

Following our Sports Day on the 10th July, Careers week will be held from 11th to 14th July for our Year 10s. They will be participating in workshops with people from various industries, experiencing mock interviews to practice these skills and having the opportunity to gain further information at a careers fair. It is always an interesting and productive week for the year group and I hope they will gain lots of insight from it, ahead of their final year while they are starting to consider their next steps over the coming months.

Attendance and Punctuality

Thank you for ongoing support in encouraging your child's attendance to school each and every day. Please encourage your child to ensure they also on time to every lesson as this is something I am working on with the year group, to ensure they are maximising their learning.

While it is a busy term for Year 10, I am confident that their resilience and commitment to their studies will help them to navigate this, alongside the support we have in place. However, if they do need to talk to a member of staff about anything, they are always welcome to come and speak with me or another trusted adult in the academy. As always, please don't hesitate to contact us using the academy email address info@bristolmet.net if you have any concerns or queries as well.

Kind regards

Emma Ball

Associate Assistant Principal - Raising Attainment Leader for Year 10