

Our Ref: SST/NMO/HBr

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

**Re: AS Examinations**

Both Mrs Montagu and I have spent considerable time over the last few weeks reviewing how the new Year 12 cohort have settled into Sixth Form life and the progress that they are making. Both of us feel that they have been an absolute credit both to themselves, to you and to the school. Frustratingly our Year 12 pupils have had an extremely challenging year. First with the lockdown in the spring, resulting in their GCSE examinations being cancelled and subsequently this autumn where some pupils have had to self-isolate or lost their normal class teacher as they have been self-isolating. Through no fault of their own our Year 12 pupils have had a raw deal. Both Mrs Montagu and I have reflected at length how we can alleviate pressure this year and gain some additional time for our pupils to work in-class with their subject teachers. Ordinarily we would insist on all Year 12 pupils taking AS examinations during the summer and the outcome of these exams would determine their Year 13 pathway. In light of current events and the overall level of uncertainty regarding any further impact that the virus may have on our Year 12 pupils we have decided to make the AS examinations optional next summer.

In making the examinations optional we feel that a weight of pressure will be lifted from both our Year 12 pupils and our staff. Year 12 will have additional teaching time with their teachers next summer when we hope we are looking back sat on the other side of the virus. We also feel that this decision will support pupils with their overall mental health, wellbeing and anxiety. Both Mrs Montagu and I are acutely aware that Year 12 have not sat a formal public set of examinations and we would rather allow our pupils to build up their examination confidence slowly and incrementally.

All of Year 12 will still sit a mock examination series in January. We do feel that this will give our pupils a feel for what the real A Level examinations will look like at the end of Year 13. Following these mocks pupils may wish to discuss dropping from four to three subjects with the Sixth Form management team. Alternatively, they may wish to continue with their full suite of subjects.

I would also like to reassure you that if your son/daughter is considering university then the absence of an AS grade will not negatively impact on their application.

Should you wish your son/daughter to sit AS examinations next summer then please email the school at [exams@thedustonschool.org](mailto:exams@thedustonschool.org)

Yours faithfully,



Mr Strickland  
Principal

**Mr S Strickland - Principal - BA (Hons), MA, NPQH**

01604 460004 | [letters@thedustonschool.org](mailto:letters@thedustonschool.org) | [www.thedustonschool.org](http://www.thedustonschool.org)



INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE



SCHOOL  
MEMBER