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Important communication regarding March trial exams

1 message

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To: year.11@hemelschool.com, Year 13 <year.13@hemelschool.com>

Cc: Charles Farmery <c.farmery@hemelschool.com>, Paul Bryson <p.bryson@hemelschool.com>, Fiona Dayton <f.dayton@hemelschool.com>

Dear Parents and Students,

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on Monday afternoon, I would like to take this opportunity to update you specifically on our arrangements for the forthcoming trial examination series.

Before I go any further it is important that I make it very clear that we have thought long and hard about the forthcoming trial exams; about the pros and cons of the varying scenarios open to us. Throughout the last 8 weeks, it has been important that we have been the stability for all our students and that what they have continued to receive from us has been quite simply business as usual. Our messaging has been consistent throughout because we have recognised that stability and consistency is what our students need during a time of uncertainty. We also recognise the pressure our students are under; we recognise this as a staffing body because we are feeling this pressure too, not only as professionals but as parents.

Given that school will be open to all students from the 8th of March it is not feasible for us or fair on students to start trial exams remotely and then change to being on site. Therefore, all trial exams will begin on March 9th with students completing their trial exams on site.

Exams and Lessons

It is important for me to continue to reiterate the same message from my previous communications. These trial exams are just **one piece of evidence** that will be used to determine a student's grade this summer alongside the evidence that staff have already gathered and will continue to gather from class work. Student grades will not rely exclusively on performance in the trial exams. It is also worth reminding ourselves that the trial exam process is a normal part of the Year 11 and Year 13 academic calendar; in past years students would have already sat a set of trial exams and would be preparing for a second set before Easter. These trial exams will enable teachers to identify gaps and support our students in preparing for the forthcoming "mini tests" suggested by Ofqual and the DfE.

The most up to date timetable for the trial exams is attached. A copy of this can also be found on the school website. **Insert link here**

All Year 11 and Year 13 lessons will continue for the duration of the exams; students must go to their timetabled classrooms when not in an exam. They must also ensure they are available for their onsite LFT testing when scheduled.

Timing

Timings for the morning and afternoon sessions will remain the same; the morning exams will start at 9.00am and the afternoon exams will start at 2.00pm.

Students who are sitting an afternoon exam should bring in a packed lunch where possible.

In preparation for the exams:

- All Year 11 students must line up in the area outside the changing rooms; students must aim to be lined up at least 15 minutes before the start of each exam.
- All Year 13 students must line up in the car park area outside West Block; students must aim to be lined up at least 15 minutes before the start of each exam.

Equipment

All students must come to every exam properly equipped. It will **not** be possible, in the current climate, to loan **any** equipment to students. Students must ensure that they have with them a well equipped, clear pencil case with several pens, pencils, a ruler, rubber and any other subject specific items such as a calculator or protractor.

Face Coverings & Social Distancing

As per the guidance on returning to school; all students will be required to wear a face covering for the duration of their exams.

All exam desks will be spaced as far apart as is possible whilst maintaining the capacity needed for each exam. Exams will also take place within year group bubbles only.

All students must remain in their year group bubbles when lining up for examinations and when using the one way system to move around the school site.

Testing

All students will have 3 Lateral Flow Tests on their return to school. For Year 11 and 13 students this will take place on Monday 8th March, Wednesday 10th March or Thursday 11th March and then again on Tuesday 16th March or Friday 19th March.

Further information about testing will be sent out in due course. Testing on Thursday 11th March, Tuesday 16th March and Friday 19th March will take place during lessons and in between exams.

For Year 13 students only: students must ensure they are onsite for their allocated test time.

Self Isolating Students

If a student is self isolating, provision can be made for the exam to be taken remotely, at home, at the same time as the scheduled onsite exam. Please contact Miss Bevan immediately if you are self isolating and likely not to be onsite for an exam.

INSET Day

Friday March 26th is an INSET Day for staff. There will be no lessons or exams for students on this day.

In summary; the trial exams for Y11&13 will:

- **Start on Tuesday March 9th** - please find attached an updated copy of the exam timetable, one can also be found on the school website.
- **Be held on site** - we will be using the sports hall and M9 in addition to the smaller venues for access arrangements.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any queries.

Kind regards,

Miss Eleanor Bevan
Assistant Headteacher
The Hemel Hempstead School



Trial Exam Timetable 2021 - Student version - Trial Exam Timetable 2021.pdf

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