



Dear Upper Sixth Boys and their Parents/Guardians,

### **IB and A-Level Trial Examinations, January 2020**

The Upper Sixth Form IB and A-Level trial examinations take place straight after the Christmas holiday from **Tuesday 7 January**. The IB trial examinations run until **Friday 17 January** and the A-Level trial examinations run until **Saturday 18 January**. IB boys return to lessons as normal from Period 1 on Saturday 18 January; A-Level boys return to lessons as normal from Period 1 on Monday 20 January.

Please find attached the timetables for these [IB](#) and [A-Level](#) trial examinations, which are also now posted on the website. I also attach details of the [examination leave rules](#) and instructions; boys are on study leave for the duration of the exam period, but are expected to be in school in good time for all the exams they are due to sit. Boys are also expected to fulfil their sporting, musical and extra-curricular activities during the exam period.

The importance of these examinations cannot be underestimated. In just over five months' time, boys will be sitting their actual IB Diploma and A-Level exams. These results will determine their university, tertiary education or work options, and their future careers. The January trials will give boys and their teachers the clearest and most comprehensive opportunity to date to ascertain their progress and subject knowledge. Past experience repeatedly shows that those boys who treat the trials seriously go on to do well in later exams. Those who do not take the trials seriously do not give themselves the chance to work out exactly how much they know of their courses, and therefore make the challenge of preparing for subsequent exams significantly more daunting and risky.

Taking the trials seriously means treating the trials like 'real' IB/A-Level exams, revising thoroughly and devoting suitable time to all your subjects. The Christmas break is therefore a crucial time for consolidation, learning and revision, and it is imperative that boys find regular and structured times from now to work and to revise.

Ultimately, it is up to individual boys to take responsibility for their futures and to work hard for their trial exams. But parents also play a vital role in helping to create a work-conducive atmosphere at home. Parents can support boys in their revision by helping them to construct a revision timetable and by finding and ring-fencing significant amounts of time over the break during which diligent revision can take place, without distractions.

I am sure you do not need me to remind you that the boys are approaching the most important time of their school careers so far. I hope that all boys will rise to the challenge and prioritise their work in the coming weeks. If they do, I look forward to being able to congratulate them on a set of results both after the trials and next summer that truly reflect their ability and which open doors to the best possible future.

### **A note for those boys eligible for extra time in exams**

Boys with extra time in exams may find that they have some long days of internal exams with very short break times. This can happen in the IB/A-Levels themselves, and is beyond the school's control; the trial exams therefore give boys a valuable opportunity to experience this and develop coping strategies as they prepare for the actual IB/A-Level exams.

Where the total duration of written exams in one day is more than six hours including extra time, boys will be able to take one of those exams on a different day (as is the case in the actual

examinations). Boys who are in this situation will be contacted to let them know about their revised exam timetables.

Finally, detailed information about the exam regulations and policies, as well as other information, are available via Firefly [here](#). You will also find helpful revision resources on Firefly [here](#).

Yours sincerely,

Sam Baldock  
**Deputy Head (Academic)**