

November 2016

Our Ref: RSM/AMcC

Dear Parent/Guardian

I write to inform you that we have considered the various options in relation to Year 13 study. As highlighted at the Year 13 Parent Information Evening on Tuesday 20 September, the Academy and all other schools across Northern Ireland have been considering whether or not Year 13 pupils should return to school prior to the Summer holidays, after completing their AS examinations, to start their A2 studies. This situation has arisen because of the difference in curriculum and examination windows between Northern Ireland and the mainland. As there are no AS examinations on the mainland, these schools will continue A Level study until mid-July in Year 13. CCEA (Northern Ireland Examination Authority), following a consultation exercise, has decided to schedule the AS examinations earlier than in previous years. This scheduling will reduce the curriculum time for Year 13 pupils, as study leave commences approximately mid-May and classes will not resume until September, therefore losing a block of teaching time.

After careful consultation with my colleagues and discussions with a number of parents and pupils in relation to the examination timetable proposed by CCEA, it is obvious that there is a very limited window at the end of June for pupils to return to continue their A Level study. In many cases, the pupils will be uncertain which three A Levels they are intending to continue with and it will be impossible, at that time of the year, to implement a new timetable arrangement, so all pupils would simply continue in their respective AS class. Therefore, it has been decided that in **the last two weeks of June** we will provide an opportunity for pupils to complete their UCAS personal statement and other associated careers activities, thus alleviating some of the pressures our pupils will face in Year 14.

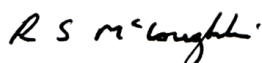
I ask for your support in ensuring that your son/daughter attends these essential careers classes following their AS examinations.

For your information, we have been very clear with CCEA that future AS examinations should be timetabled as late as possible within the examination window, so as not to diminish teaching time available for A Level study.

I take this opportunity to wish your son/daughter every success in the mock examinations after Christmas and with their studies for the remainder of the academic year.

As always, thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully



R S McLoughlin
Principal