

Dear Blackpool Sixth students and parents/carers,

We hope this letter finds you well and that your son/daughter/ward is happily settling into college. We thought it would be helpful to provide you with some information about the timetable and assessments in college. We continue to place the health and wellbeing of our students and staff at the forefront of all we do. We recognise that COVID-19 is still present in the community and there may be times during the academic year when we need to amend our practice in light of government guidance. This letter gives details of the situation.

What will happen to the timetable after October half term?

Our timetable will remain in the current structure after October half term - there will be no change. We have made this decision to remain on the current timetable after considering the local context in terms of COVID and based on the most recent government guidance, which states that we must have a contingency plan to reintroduce “bubbles” for a short period if this becomes necessary. The current timetable more easily allows us to put this contingency in place, if needed. We are conscious that too many changes can have a negative impact on wellbeing.

Will mock exams take place this academic year?

Yes, mock exams for all students studying GCSE and for upper sixth students studying A levels and some level 3 vocational subjects are scheduled for the weeks of **29th November 2021 and 21st February 2022.**

Mock exams for lower sixth studying A levels and some level 3 vocational subjects are scheduled for the week of **28th February 2022.**

Some exams for vocational subjects take place outside the normal exam periods to reflect the needs of the qualification and students will be supported to prepare for these through in-class mock exams at an appropriate time prior to the relevant exam. Teachers will provide students and yourselves with the details about these mock exams nearer the time.

Planned remote learning 2021-2022

During the mock weeks of 29 November and 21 February, most upper sixth students will work from home (unless they are told differently by their teacher) studying for their mock exams and learning remotely; they will attend college for their mock exams. Lower sixth and Route3 students will attend college as normal during these two weeks but will be excused from a lesson if and when they have a GCSE mock exam.

During the mock week of 28 February, students in lower sixth will work from home studying for their mock exams and learning remotely; they will attend college for their mock exams. Route3 and upper sixth students will attend college as normal during this week.

We have also included **six remote learning days in the academic year** where students will learn from home to:

- ensure we are all (staff and students) prepared and confident to work remotely for any enforced remote learning should the need arise;
- specifically plan opportunities for and deliver high quality technology-based teaching, learning and assessment to enhance our students' learning experience;
- prepare our students for further study and work in a digital world.

These days are as follows:

- **12 October 2021**
- **9 December 2021**
- **19 January 2022**
- **16 March 2022**
- **10 May 2022**
- **22 June 2022**

How will students be assessed in summer 2022?

Ofqual and the DfE have now published some of their guidance on [summer 2022 grading and assessment](#). Please find the key points below.

- It is the government's policy that exams and assessments for GCSEs, AS and A levels (as well as for vocational and technical qualifications) should go ahead in summer 2022.
- Exam boards will provide advance information about the focus of the content of the exams for all GCSE, AS and A level subjects (except GCSE English literature, history, ancient history and geography) for the summer 2022 exams.
- Exam boards will allow us to apply some minor and limited adaptations to the assessment of internally assessed vocational coursework units (BTEC and CTEC), if necessary. All units must be taught and the aim will be to assess all, to ensure students are well prepared for their progression.
- The policy intention of providing advance information is that it will support students' revision. Therefore, the DfE has confirmed that advance information will be provided by 7 February 2022 at the latest.
- The government is also considering the approach that would be used to determine teacher-assessed grades (TAGs) if exams cannot take place so that a contingency measure is in place. This means that **students must endeavour to show their teachers what they know and can do in each key assessment, formal assignment or mock exam** as this may be included as evidence upon which teachers make their TAG judgements. We will make it clear to students which assessments will potentially count towards TAGs once we have the outcome of the [government's consultation](#). We will keep you informed as soon as we hear further information from the government.

And finally...

We will keep students informed of any further developments via their college email address but please also check the college website regularly <https://www.blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/coronavirus/> because this is where we will post any significant new information relevant to all students.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about the content of this letter.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Gail Yeadon
Deputy Principal

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Vice Principal