



From J M Gilbert BSc, PGCE, MBA, MRSC Deputy Head (Academic)

The Pre-University Programme for Year 13

Dear parents of pupils in Year 13

I hope that you and your families are safe and well and that you've made the most of your Easter break, despite the exceptional circumstances we all find ourselves in.

I know that the announcement of how A-level grades will be determined for your daughter or son has caused anxiety for some. Please be assured that the school feels confident that it can propose to the boards the grades we expected your child to achieve in the summer. The evidence upon which the school will arrive at those grades is very broad and will vary from subject to subject. We are not expecting them to sit any further assessments as we will be making predictions based upon their performance throughout their two years of study and will take into account the expected improvement pupils typically make between their mocks and summer exams.

Since Ofqual made the announcement that summer A-level outcomes would be decided by centre assessed grades, we have been busy making preparation to provide your daughter or son with meaningful, formative learning for the summer term. Unlike any other previous cohort, they have a unique opportunity to undertake some genuinely developmental preparation for university, rather than race to the Box Office for an entry ticket to claim their place. Thus, the College has developed a bespoke pre-university programme to help them successfully transition to the next stage.

I have appended further details below, but in outline the programme will run as follows:

- During week 1 of term, beginning Wednesday April 15th, pupils will have the opportunity to submit to their teachers any work that they have completed over the holiday. They can do this by email, or through MS Teams if their teacher has created a class for them to work this way. All pupils should then have contact from their tutor or hsm during the week to discuss how the Pre-University Programme will work for them.
- From week 2 to half term (April 20th to May 22nd) pupils should engage with the College's Pre-University Programme, specially created to provide them with a university-like experience and prepare them for what academic life might be like in the next stage.
- After half term (May 29th to June 26th) pupils may continue to engage with the Pre-University Programme. Activities planned for the second half of term will include opportunities for more advanced work / further stretch and challenge.

Please find attached an example of what a faculty programme might look like.

Alongside the academic offering there will be a 'blue health' programme to support every child's mindfulness, health and wellbeing during the period of remote learning. They will also continue to receive the support they need from Miss Gordon and the Futures Department regarding their UCAS applications, or similar. Departments will also be offering daily, weekly and other challenges to keep pupils motivated during these difficult times.

Your daughter or son's tutor or hsm will be the person responsible for supporting them as they engage with the programme, so please keep in touch with them as the term progresses.

We hope that your son or daughter will find the Pre-University Programme stimulating and enjoyable. If you have any questions, please raise them with your child's tutor or hsm in the first instance.

Best wishes

Jonny Gilbert

Deputy Head (Academic)

Year 13 Pre-University Programme Summer 2020

Introduction

With there no longer being need for your daughter or son to make preparation for their A-level exams, there is a unique opportunity to offer them a rich and meaningful pre-university programme during the summer term. This programme will stimulate and challenge them intellectually and help them understand what academic life might be like in the next stage.

There will be the opportunity for them to explore areas of interest aligned to their proposed course of study and also the chance to enjoy wider enrichment in less familiar areas that could be of great value to their personal and academic development. For example, if their passion is for the creative arts, they may still find benefit from some broader learning in business or politics. An artist may take inspiration from a short course in astronomy or a chemist might find intellectual stimulation in a study of the Renaissance. At the present time, all might find interest in epidemiology or anthropogenic climate change.

A university-style approach

The College will offer your daughter or son a university-style experience during the summer term. In order to do this the curriculum will be divided into **faculties** as follows:

Creative Arts

Comprising: Art & Photography, Design & Technology, Textiles, Drama & Dance and Music

Classical Arts

Comprising: English, Classics, History and Philosophy

Social Sciences

Comprising: Geography, Economics, Business and Politics

Modern Languages

Comprising: French, German and Spanish (possibly others)

Natural Sciences

Comprising: Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and Computing

What will be offered?

Each **faculty** will offer activities / links to lectures / short courses that can be accessed online. Each will provide intellectual stimulus and challenge to support each child's on-going personal and academic development as they make preparation for higher education.

In addition, there will be a **blue health** programme for all involving Futures, PSHE and PE.

What will the faculty programmes look like?

Each faculty will break down its offering into **three strands** which will run alongside the Blue Health programme.

1. Universal elective

These are activities that relate to the faculty or department but should be accessible to **all** pupils.

2. Faculty core

These are activities that are more specific to each faculty and/or department that are designed to further your child's existing knowledge and understanding. Some of these activities may span more than one faculty e.g. a politics department activity might be relevant to natural sciences as well as social sciences.

3. Faculty elective

These are more challenging activities specific to each faculty or department that are designed to stretch and challenge your child's existing knowledge and understanding. As above, department activities may span more than one faculty. Faculty electives may be optional and only applicable to those who wish to continue working after the half term break.

4. The Blue Health Programme

This will include on-going UCAS support and HE preparation, a PSHE offering, suggestion for exercise from the PE or dance departments and a space for competitions and challenges.

An **example** faculty programme is attached.

How will the programme work?

Under the guidance of your child's tutor or hsm it is expected that they will engage in at least one faculty programme as structured below:

Dates	Programme	Notes	Blue Health
Week 1 15/04 to 19/04	Submission of any work completed over the Easter holiday Discussion with tutors / hsm Introduction to the programme	Thoughts around faculty courses suggested and agreed	<div>Blue Health programme</div> <div>Includes: UCAS and HE support; PSHE advice; daily exercise</div> <div>Competitions and challenges</div>
Weeks 2 to 6 20/04 to 22/05	Engagement with the faculty programmes Expectation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Engagement with some universal electivesEngagement with faculty core activities in at least 1 faculty Tutors or hsms will monitor progress through weekly digital huddles	Faculty courses continue to be created and developed by departments Tutors and hsms play a key role in supporting pupils in their work	
Weeks 8 to 11 29/05 to 26/06	Continue to engage with the faculty programmes Expectation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Completion of faculty core activities in at least 1 faculty (if not already completed)Faculty electives in at least one faculty	Optional	
Any pupils considering a retake in the autumn can liaise with the relevant Head of Department to construct a programme of support over the course of the term.			

How will the programmes be delivered?

Individual departments/faculties have the freedom to decide how best to deliver their courses using the school's online tools (please see the example attached).

How much time should my son or daughter be spending on the faculty activities?

Under their normal timetable programme your son or daughter would typically spend 15 to 17 hours per week in lessons.

A **faculty core** programme should provide them with activities that should occupy a minimum of 10 hours per week, with not less than 5 hours per week being apportioned to allowing them to engage with universal elective activities, challenges and competitions.

How will my son or daughter be expected to evidence the work they have done?

It is anticipated that assigned tasks will be developmental and formative rather than judgemental.

Departments have free rein on how they expect pupils to engage with the tasks they have assigned. Your daughter or son will receive affirmation of the work they have done, but like at university, they should not expect to have formal assessment or feedback on their relative success with every task they have been assigned, unless this has been made an expectation given the nature of the task that has been set.

What support will my son or daughter receive?

Your child's house tutor or hsm will play a pivotal role in helping them through the programme. Their tutor or hsm will help them to determine which faculty (or faculties) best suits their higher education ambitions and guide them towards the core and elective programmes most appropriate to their needs.

Thereafter, the faculty tutors will be on hand to support them with their work.

JMG

April 2020