

6 April 2011

To all Parents of Pupils in Year 13 – IB Pupils only

Dear Parents

Further to Mr Dean's letter in October outlining key dates for the summer term I am writing to pass on important information in preparation for your son or daughter's final term at PGS. I enclose a guide for next term which I would encourage all pupils to read carefully.

### **IB Timetable**

The period of IB examinations is from Tuesday 3 May – Monday 23 May. Your son or daughter will have received their individual timetable from their tutor showing the dates and times of their examinations taking place this summer. A master copy is on display on the IB notice board, outside Miss Read's office and on the VLE.

I would be grateful if you could check the schedule carefully with your son or daughter and mark the dates in your own diaries, noting in particular whether an examination is scheduled to take place in the morning or afternoon, and which paper takes place on a particular date. Pupils must wear school uniform for all exams. If you have any further queries relating to exams please contact Mr Taylor.

### **Year 13 IB Study Leave: commences Tuesday 3 May 2011**

Pupils are in school as normal for the first three days of next term (Tuesday 26 - Thursday 28 April) before the Royal Wedding and Bank Holiday weekend.

Study leave for Year 13 IB pupils then begins at 0830 on Tuesday 3 May. From that date, pupils are not required to be in school outside examination times. IB pupils should, however, sign in and out at the school office when present in school during their Study Leave period, and must wear school uniform at all times when on the school premises.

### **Code of Conduct during Examinations**

It may be helpful to reiterate the following points:

- The Library will be open from 8.30am throughout the exam period.
- Morning examinations commence at 0900 and afternoon examinations at 1400.

- Candidates should gather ten minutes before an examination is due to start and wait outside/in the Bristow-Clavell Science Centre until they go into the Science Lecture Theatre. They should be smartly dressed and silent on entering the examination.
- Mobile phones, and any other electronic devices, must be switched off and handed in at the start of the session (NB wrist watches only, not clocks, are permitted). Failure to do so could result in disqualification from all examinations.
- Pencil cases, if used, should be transparent.
- Candidates must write in blue or black ink (except in multiple choice, when pencil is used).
- Gel pens/highlighter can only be used to highlight questions or other information on an exam paper; they must not be used in conjunction with a candidate's answer to any question.
- Correction fluid must not be used.
- Only water may be taken into exams, in a clear bottle without a label. No food may be taken in, unless medically required.
- Calculator lids should be left outside the hall and calculator procedures should be carefully followed (distributed to candidates and available on VLE).
- IB candidates will have 5 minutes additional reading time at the beginning of all papers (except multiple choice) during which time they are not permitted to write, make notes or use calculators.
- Candidates are not allowed to leave the hall before the official finishing time of the exam.
- No equipment may be shared during an examination.
- A further copy of the Notice to Candidates is attached.

### **Special Circumstances**

In case of illness on the day of an examination, candidates should contact Mr Taylor, or Miss Read, as soon as possible. It is advisable for candidates to attempt to sit the examination, if possible, in order to provide evidence of their performance on the day. It is usual for a candidate to have to complete at least 50% of the assessment for a subject before a mark will be awarded in recognition of mitigating circumstances. Mr Taylor will be able to assist in communicating with the IBO if this situation arises, although prompt medical evidence for any illness or complaint will be required.

### **Year 13 Leavers' Day: Friday 27 May**

IB pupils are very welcome to attend this event, for which school uniform should be worn, and which will incorporate IB book return for all books which have not yet been returned. The time for IB pupils to arrive at school will be confirmed next term. The 2011 Year Books and hooded sweatshirts will be available and there will be a Leavers' assembly and a BBQ lunch for Year 13 pupils and staff in the main quad. The Sixth Form team provides entertainment in the Sixth Form Centre for pupils after lunch; there are no formal lessons in the afternoon.

## **IB Results**

IB Diploma results will be sent to the school and to universities on Tuesday 5 July 2011. The results are embargoed until Wednesday 6 July at 1300 when the school is open for pupils to collect results. All Year 13 pupils are encouraged to come in to school to collect their results, although they will be posted home if they are not collected. They will also be available shortly after this time electronically online, via candidates' personal codes.

Pupils have the opportunity to log on to their UCAS accounts on Wednesday 6 July. This will enable them to see if their application has been updated, showing if they have been accepted onto their chosen course even if they have not received their results. Pupils who have not had their UCAS accounts updated should not be unduly concerned.

If pupils miss their offer, they will normally be advised to contact the university in question to ask whether or not they will nonetheless be accepted onto the chosen course. Whilst sometimes a university will give an immediate decision, it is very common that they will ask an IB pupil to wait until the issue of A Level results on Thursday 18 August before making a decision. Before this date, it is also likely that the school may have had contact with the university on your behalf – you should speak to Mr Taylor or Dr Galliver if this is relevant to you.

If pupils are disappointed in any examinations, please be aware that pupils should take prompt advice in the few days which follow the release of results about whether or not to apply for a re-mark of the paper(s) in question (a 'Category 1 Enquiry upon Results'). However, they should also be aware that marks may go down as well as up, so this is not normally recommended unless there has been a problem with securing a university place. A swift application for a re-mark may sometimes helpfully be turned around before the issue of A Level results, although this is not always the case. In exceptional circumstances, pupils might also choose to retake some or all of their IB examinations, and the next opportunity for this would be in the November session (which takes place from Tues 1 – Fri 18 November 2011). However, please note the deadline of 25 July for the cheapest registration for a re-take. Further details will be available on the VLE.

For information, A Level results will be sent to the school and to universities on Wednesday 17 August 2011. The results are embargoed until Thursday 18 August when the school is open for pupils to collect results. Year 13 may collect their results from 0800 onwards when staff will also be available for consultation.

The following advice is for both A Level and IB pupils:

Please ensure that you do not forget to make your Firm/Insurance UCAS choice by the final deadline of 5 May 2011 (for those who have received all their decisions regarding offers by 31 March).

On receiving their results and meeting their offers pupils should find that their UCAS account will be updated to confirm that their Conditional Firm (CF) university has accepted them on to their chosen course. If a pupil unfortunately misses their first choice offer but

secures the necessary grades to meet their insurance offer they will be released from their first choice and accepted by their insurance choice, all of which will be shown on their UCAS account. Pupils who are offered their insurance choice are encouraged to accept these. It is our experience that in most cases their insurance offers will be a stronger choice than a similar course at a university that they may pick up through clearing. At this stage there may well be some phone calls to make with regards to university accommodation.

It is certainly our expectation that pupils this year should be confident about their university places but, given recent reports of fewer places and more applicants, it is worth repeating our strong advice to look carefully at their insurance choices and to visit if they have not done so already. This year, perhaps more than previous years, nationally we are likely to see fewer places but with increased demand. Ensuring computer access during the week after results is also encouraged.

UCAS Extra is now available online and this allows pupils who are holding no offers, either because they have been rejected from their chosen universities or have declined offers, to reapply where there are spaces on courses. This is occasionally used by pupils at PGS.

Two years ago UCAS started a scheme to help pupils 'trade up', called the Adjustment period. If a pupil should gain results that exceed the offer of their Conditional Firm choice they can apply through the Adjustment Period. For example, if a pupil secures ABB instead of the BBB that their Conditional Firm university has offered they may wish to see if they can 'trade up' their chosen course at another university. The Adjustment period will be available from A Level results day for a two week period and it will allow pupils to make contact and apply to universities one at a time. Relatively few pupils are likely to need this service; it was used by only a few hundred candidates countrywide last year.

Heads of House, Heads of Department and the Sixth Form Team – including Mr Taylor - are available on IB and A Level results days to offer any advice or support. The Careers Department will also be open, providing telephones, computers and access to university information. As a result, it is best if pupils collect their results in person. The period immediately after A Level results in particular (if relevant) is a crucial time for pupils to confirm their university place or discuss their options, if they have not already done so, and we encourage all pupils to be in School on this morning if they need to.

### **Student Finance**

Those applying for student loans should note that the deadline for application is 31 May to ensure that finance is in place by the start of term. A Guide to Financial Support from Student Finance England is enclosed with this mailing. However, if a pupil has applied for deferred entry then application does not need to be made this year.

### **Good Luck**

If you have any queries or concerns in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me ([n.gallop@pgs.org.uk](mailto:n.gallop@pgs.org.uk) or tel: 023 92 681362) and if you should have any specific questions relating to exams please contact Mr Taylor ([s.taylor@pgs.org.uk](mailto:s.taylor@pgs.org.uk) or tel: 023 92 681324) or Miss

Read ([j.read@pgs.org.uk](mailto:j.read@pgs.org.uk) or tel: 023 92 681363). There are some useful tips for candidates in the Final Term guide which I recommend reading through. Good luck to all the pupils who are sitting exams and also to parents who are supporting the examined. I look forward to seeing you all at the Leavers' Service and Lunch on Saturday 25 June.

Yours sincerely

**N D Gallop**  
**Assistant Head (Head of Sixth Form)**

Enc    A Guide to Financial Support  
      The Final Term  
      IB Notice to Candidates