



MONDAY 23RD MARCH 2020

Super Curricular Department Update

Dear Parents, Guardians and Students,

This letter is to reiterate our school-wide message: whilst we are going through an unprecedented period of time and having to adapt to a change of model in our delivery of education, we are still as committed as ever to provide the strongest possible preparation for our students as they progress through their academic careers. The ultimate aim from a Super Curricular perspective is twofold: (1) to develop rounded individuals by offering opportunities to build upon personal skills and experiences; (2) to enable students to be as competitive as possible when applying to top universities. These interconnected endeavours will remain the underpinning factors driving our decisions moving forward. As we are adapting to the changing circumstances, the below information will outline some of the procedures and processes that we are putting in place.

UCAS registration and personal statement writing

The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) is the online system used when applying to British universities. As done in previous years, students will create an online UCAS account and inform us of their username, password and ID numbers. To help prepare and guide students through this process, we will be providing a PowerPoint and creating an informative video. There will also be a live session on personal statement writing. In addition, students will be allocated a personal statement teacher. We encourage students now to begin making notes and creating personal statement drafts. Building up to this period, in subject-specific Career Meetings, we have been assisting students in their efforts to record and reflect upon relevant experiences via the use of writing blogs. These blogs can be used as a building block and inform some of the content in their personal statements.

Admission test classes

Students have already engaged in admission test classes. In continuing to prepare for university admission tests, students will now be introduced to an online platform. This will contain content teaching theory and contain specific practice questions and past papers. Our mock examinations for admission tests will continue as usual.

Mentoring sessions

Mentoring sessions will continue as usual, including interview prep. Whilst sessions were scheduled to end in Easter and resume in June, in light of what is happening, **we are extending the mentoring sessions to give further assurance to students and to make strategic use of the time available.** Specific times for the mentoring sessions will appear on individual student timetables.

Australian university applications

Earlier this month students had the opportunity to register interest in applying to Australian universities – we have over 30 students across the AS and A2 year groups who have done so. Whilst visiting university fairs and admissions talks were scheduled for later this month, guidance will now be facilitated online. We are currently working with the official Australian application support service to produce a booklet with further information. In addition to the booklet, we will be communicating via email with students to discuss the next steps in completing their applications. Applying to Australia will go ahead as usual.

Engaging with universities (e.g. open days)

Upcoming open days have now been cancelled. However, many universities have been continuing to advertise open days taking place in September (e.g. University College London on the 12th; University of Cambridge and University of Oxford on the 18th; Imperial College London on the 19th). We will be promoting the open days and monitoring the situation as we approach these dates. In addition, in the meantime, we are liaising with universities to provide promotional material and offer representatives to engage in online activities and Q&A sessions. Moreover, our university preparation project will be going ahead – we will be delivering live sessions and recordings to help facilitate this.

Career Meetings and 1:1 sessions

The remaining 1:1 sessions due to take place this month will continue online. Students will be contacted individually via email to schedule this. Moving forward, there will be a new cycle of 1:1 sessions following Easter. The focus of the next round of 1:1 meetings will be on developing strategies for university applications.

Work placements

Inevitably there will be some difficulty in securing conventional work placements. Earlier this month we provided a letter to congratulate students and to inform parents/guardians regarding their work placement efforts. We would very much like to keep this momentum and discover new ways to build upon personal skills and offer students ways to apply their subject-specific knowledge to the workplace. One avenue we are considering involves interactive online career programmes, with experienced professionals from industry. We will keep you updated as we continue to innovate. In addition, we would like to encourage those, who are able, to secure work placement opportunities to enhance their placement portfolios.

Clubs and societies

Our aim is to minimise disruption and where possible to either continue online or postpone to September. For example, Literacy Society will continue as usual (including the Reading Challenge and associated writing competitions). The Young Enterprise Programme, Duke of Edinburgh Award, LAMDA, First Aid Training and the Young Business Enterprise have been postponed until the start of the next academic year. We are establishing new ways and are in contact with providers to circumvent some of the disruption. For instance, for the Young Business Enterprise, we will be deferring activities to October where an 'Industry Investment Day' will be organised – students can present their business pitches to a panel of entrepreneurs followed by a networking lunch.

Olympiad training

Training for subject Olympiads will continue. We are currently discussing with the respective bodies the best ways in which the Olympiads can be conducted. More information will follow as we progress.

Growth mindset and active recall learning

We launched this comprehensive initiative last month – supporting students to engage their studies, university and career pursuits with a positive mindset and to consider multiple revision strategies. We will continue to promote our initiative with recordings, worksheets and project tasks.

More information will be provided to students as we continuously update and reinforce our efforts to offer the strongest possible range of Super Curricular activities. We would also like to take this opportunity to extend our best wishes and to thank you for your constant support. Whilst this has been described as a challenging time, we are confident that our students will continue to excel.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact the Super Curricular Department with any further questions.

With best wishes,

The Super Curricular Team