.....a guide for parents
INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our Parents’ Guide which I hope you will find helpful.

This Handbook is designed to provide you with information which should be valuable to you in the coming months and throughout your daughter’s/son’s time in the Sixth Form. It is intended to supplement our School Calendar, website, and letters about specific matters.

At The Hertfordshire & Essex High School we are committed to offering the best possible teaching and learning and the strongest possible guidance, within a caring school community. High expectations and strong support, combined with dedicated staff, ensure that students are able to develop self-confidence, to fulfil their potential and to realise their aspirations. We look for your support as parents/carers to work alongside us in order to achieve this.

We feel that it is crucial that parents should be kept in the picture throughout this important period in their daughter’s/son’s education and we do our best to keep everyone fully informed. Reliance on ‘student post’ can be hit and miss, therefore we recommend you look regularly at Parentmail and Firefly, for any letters or important documents issued.

Your daughter’s/son’s Sixth Form years are likely to be the most exciting, challenging and rewarding years of their life to date: they will also be hard work and quite stressful at times. Students will need support throughout this time and we wish to work with you to ensure that they get all the information, advice and guidance they may require.

Sixth Form education is a new experience in many ways for a student: they have chosen to stay in education rather than to seek employment; they have decided which courses to study; they will probably want to work outside of school hours in order to become more financially independent; they may want to learn how to drive; they will undoubtedly want to socialise with friends. Your daughter/son will need your help to ensure that a sensible balance is maintained and that they do not, for example, find themselves too tired from a job to be able to do justice to their school work.

The transition from being a GCSE student to an A Level student is not easy; if your daughter/son is to become a truly independent learner, ready for college, university or employment, they will need much help and guidance from both parents/carers and teachers alike in the next eighteen months. Please encourage your daughter/son to talk to their subject teachers, form tutor or any of the Sixth Form team; they will be only too happy to listen, share ideas and offer support.

Your daughter/son already has a comprehensive Sixth Form Handbook which you may wish to look at from time to time. We have put together this Parents’ Guide with the aim of helping you to support your daughter/son. I hope that the booklet is useful to you, but obviously it cannot be so exhaustive as to address completely the myriad of questions which inevitably arise each year. Please remember to contact us if there are any points about which you are not sure. A booklet such as this does not replace the existing channels of communication, rather it is designed to complement them.

Mr T Marlow
Year Leader: Year 12
The academic pattern of the two years
Points of contact
Electronic Communication (Firefly and Parentmail)
Emergency school closure
Attendance matters
Managing medicines in school
Parents’ Consultation Evening
Tracking, reports and meetings
Dress code
Study guidelines
Coursework guidelines
A Level study
Negotiated Frees
Paid employment
Higher Education and alternatives guidance
Age of Majority
Progression to Year 13
Sixth Form Home School Agreement
School term and holiday dates
## The academic pattern of the two years

### Year 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Autumn Term</strong></td>
<td>Sixth Form Induction</td>
<td>September</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Baseline assessment and target setting</td>
<td>September/October</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mid-term Tracking</td>
<td>November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 12 Parents’ Evening</td>
<td>13 December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spring Term</strong></td>
<td>Mid-term Tracking</td>
<td>March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Higher Education Evening for parents/carers</td>
<td>February/March</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Higher Education/Apprenticeships Exhibition</td>
<td>March (TBC)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 12 internal examinations</td>
<td>April/May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer Term</strong></td>
<td>School Report</td>
<td>June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Your Future” (Activities Week)</td>
<td>July</td>
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<td></td>
<td>UCAS applications process begins</td>
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</tbody>
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### Year 13 (provisional)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Autumn Term</strong></td>
<td>UCAS applications continue</td>
<td>September</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>School deadline for UCAS</strong></td>
<td><strong>mid-October</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>School Report</td>
<td>October</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 13 Parents’ Evening</td>
<td>November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spring Term</strong></td>
<td>Mock Examinations</td>
<td>January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mid-term Tracking</td>
<td>February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final Tracking</td>
<td>May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer Term</strong></td>
<td>Study leave begins</td>
<td>May</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Public examinations</td>
<td>May – June</td>
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<td>Leavers’ Ball</td>
<td>June</td>
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POINTS OF CONTACT

Parents are sometimes not clear about whom to contact regarding particular matters. I hope you will find the list of details below helpful.

We aim to respond initially within 48 hours but detailed responses, requiring the gathering of specific detailed information, may take longer.

School telephone number – 01279 654127

Please direct routine matters to subject teachers or Form tutors initially, where appropriate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sixth Form Tutors and tutor groups</th>
<th>For routine matters affecting students in their tutor groups – explanations for absence, queries over academic progress, student welfare/pastoral issues.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12A – Mrs Winters</td>
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<tr>
<td>12B – Miss Tedman</td>
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<tr>
<td>12C – Mrs Kerins and Miss Compton</td>
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<td>12D – Mr Seear and Dr Spillet</td>
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<td>12E – Mr Christophy</td>
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<td>12F – Miss Tanney and Mrs Pearce</td>
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<tr>
<td>12G – Mrs Dean and Mrs Elston-Haynes</td>
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<td>12H – Mrs Jukes and Miss Conner</td>
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<tr>
<th>Subject concerns</th>
<th>For matters related to progress on courses and other academic matters.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Kate Curtis</td>
<td>English Language, English Literature, Media Studies, Film Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Hayward</td>
<td>Drama &amp; Theatre Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Robinson</td>
<td>Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Core Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Hayley Jones</td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs Dolton</td>
<td>Biology</td>
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<td>Mr Jurd</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
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<td>Mrs Dedman</td>
<td>Physics</td>
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<td>Ms Brice</td>
<td>French</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs Dean</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Kendrick</td>
<td>Business Studies, Economics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Williams</td>
<td>Computer Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs Bradford</td>
<td>Health and Social Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Tedman</td>
<td>Art, Photography</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Mason</td>
<td>Classical Civilisation, Geography, Government &amp; Politics, History, Latin, Psychology, RS, Sociology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Clayton</td>
<td>Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Vaughan</td>
<td>Global Perspectives &amp; Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs Lewis</td>
<td>Extended Project</td>
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</tbody>
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### Examinations
Mrs Sanderson

For Examination matters, eg entries, timetables, examination dates, publication of results, enquiries on results, costs of entries, re-marks.

### Attendance
Mrs Palmer

For any attendance queries.

### University / Higher Education

**Mrs T Curtis** – Sixth Form Learning Manager

For queries regarding university applications or higher education.

**Mr T Marlow** – Year Leader: Year 12  
**Mrs C Lewis** Director of Sixth Form (Acting)

For any other matters affecting our Sixth Form students or for matters of a confidential nature.

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In the case of separated parents who require two copies of the school report or tracking, please forward your request for this, in writing, to Mr Marlow.

Similarly should your daughter/son develop medical problems about which you feel we should be aware, please write to Mr Marlow. It is also vital that you inform us if you change address, telephone number or email address. This information should be passed to the school office.

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**PARENTMAIL AND FIREFLY**

We use two main forms of communication to inform Sixth Form parents of important information.

Letters are sent to parents as email attachments using the ParentMail system. In order to use ParentMail you need to verify your account. You will be sent an e-mail from ParentMail asking you to do so. When you receive this please click the link and follow the instructions. ParentMail advise that you verify your account in the first instance using a static pc/mac and not a mobile phone or tablet.

Please be aware that once you have verified your account you are responsible for updating any changes to your personal details including your e-mail address which you can do in the Settings area of ParentMail. However, when you update any of this information, it will not be immediately or automatically updated on our school records. In order to ensure that all your details are up-to-date with both the ParentMail system and school records, please let us know of any changes as they happen.

ParentMail recommend that parents download the free ParentMail app (https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/parentmail-pmx/id937274547 for Apple devices or https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.co.parentmail.parentmail for android devices). This eliminates the need to input username and password details each time you wish to access e-mail attachments and can be set up so that you are notified when a new email has been received. Please note that you will need to download the pmx version of the app and not the ParentMail 2 version.

Letters will also be posted on the school’s virtual learning environment, Firefly. Personal information relating to your daughter/son's attendance, behaviour, tracking and reports will be made available to you via Firefly. To access this information you will need to activate your account. Details of how to do this will be sent to you via ParentMail. Therefore it is important that you activate your ParentMail account in order to receive the Firefly instructions. You will be alerted by email when there is a new set of tracking or report data to view.

Both the Firefly and ParentMail login pages can be accessed from the home page of our website. The ParentMail website address is pmx.parentmail.co.uk.
EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURE

Information is also posted on our website and on Firefly, emailed via ParentMail and tweeted out via the school twitter feed @HandEHighSchool.

If you change your email address please let the school office have new details in writing.

There will be some parents/carers who may not have easy access to the internet, and we shall, of course, continue to supply correspondence in the traditional format. Please let us know if this is the case for you via the school office.

For those without easy access to the internet, we shall post a message on the school answerphone, by 7.15 am. Please note: if you do have access to the internet, please do not ring the school, as the system can only accommodate a very small number of callers at once, and we would wish to retain that facility for those without internet access.

We shall ask your daughter/son to discuss with you alternative arrangements for getting home, should the school need to be closed early - as opposed to not opening at all. Lists of these arrangements are kept in school. Our plans assume a worst case scenario, ie no telephone contact and no transport. In practice, circumstances are unlikely to be this bad and students are able to contact parents/carers. We suggest that students who can walk home do so, or go to the house of a classmate/friend where they can be safe until arrangements with parents/carers can be made.

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

When should students be in school?

In choosing to study Sixth Form courses in this school, your daughter/son has committed themselves to full-time education for two years. They must remain on the school site when not in lessons: some of this study time will be spent formally, working or reading, some will be spent being involved in the many co-curricular opportunities we offer, some will be spent informally with fellow students. Our new Sixth Form Centre with dedicated library space and computers, as well as desks and a café will shortly be available.

Our attendance arrangements are straightforward. Under normal circumstances, Sixth Form students are expected to be in school each day for:

- Morning and afternoon registration/tutor period (but see ‘Negotiated Frees’ page 12)
- All lessons (including study periods).

Students are allowed to leave the school site at lunch time only (when they must sign out and back in on their return).

We reward sustained effort with ‘Negotiated Frees’ (see below), but apart from these, your daughter/son should be studying at school.

In the Sixth Form, students are treated as young adults and should be working in partnership with teachers and parents if they are to reach their full potential. I would like to take this opportunity to ask for your support in ensuring exemplary attendance and punctuality. A good record of attendance is vital for future references; equally as important is a good record of punctuality both to registration time and to lessons. It is sometimes difficult for a student to motivate themselves to get into school promptly for registration — especially if they do not have a lesson at the start of the day, but adopting an undisciplined approach to such matters can have life-affecting consequences. Students should be in school by 8.45 am at the latest (registration is at 8.50 am).
NB: The school day runs from 8.50 am until 3.40 pm and students must not assume that they can make out-of-school commitments in 'study periods'. Students are not permitted to arrange out-of-school activities (such as driving lessons, private coaching or work experience) in non-lesson time.

- Holidays in school time should not be taken as it is impossible to recapture an A Level lesson, which is often primarily discussion-based. The copying up of notes is no substitute for a missed lesson.

- Doctor’s, dentist’s and optician’s appointments should also be made outside of school hours for the same reason.

We monitor attendance and punctuality weekly, and will contact you formally should we become concerned. You can see attendance via Firefly.

What should students do if they are not able to come to school?

All absences must be explained promptly.

- If an absence is unavoidable (for example, because of illness or because of an emergency at home), the parent should telephone the school on the day of the absence to let us know what has happened.

- Students should bring, on their return to school, a brief note from parents addressed to the Form Tutor. The note need only specify the date of the absence and the reason for it.

What do students need to do if an absence is known in advance?

Some absences can be foreseen (for example, interviews for Apprenticeships or for university or college places and driving tests). If a student knows about an absence in advance, the student must let their Form Tutor know well before the absence, with a written note or email. The student download a ‘Request for Absence’ form which they will take to subject staff to sign, so that they are informed the student will be missing from a lesson.

If the absence is to be significantly longer than a day, eg if a student wishes to organise work experience or hopes to go on a residential course during term-time, the student should discuss the proposal with the Director of Sixth Form first and certainly before making a commitment. Students should submit requests for leave of absence in writing.

Which requests for absence are normally approved?

- emergency medical or dental appointments
- a religious holiday
- a visit to a university for an Open Day (maximum 3) or for interview
- a career-related interview
- an appointment with a Connexions adviser, although these should normally be scheduled to avoid disruption to studies
- a work experience placement which is integral to the course
- participation in a significant extra-curricular activity
- attendance at a funeral
- driving test

Of course, the above is not exhaustive and we would need to consider the frequency of such absences.
Which requests for absence are normally not approved?

- holidays in term time
- leisure activities
- birthdays or other similar celebrations
- driving lessons

What about taking holidays in term time?

Students are not expected to take holidays during term time. Students cannot afford to miss lessons, particularly when courses and teaching time are so short. You should be aware that courses only last approximately thirty weeks, including revision time. As I am sure you will appreciate, we cannot authorise holidays in term-time.

Holidays in term-time may be superficially attractive, but students must remember the importance of the courses which they are following and the potential impact of the holiday on progress.

What should students do if they fall ill during the school day?

If a student feels ill in school they should go to the First Aiders. If the student is not well enough to stay in school, permission for the student to go home may be given. Under normal circumstances, all effort will be made to contact parents to let them know what has happened.

Students who feel ill should not go home without permission obtained from Mrs Lewis, Mr Marlow, Mrs Curtis or the First Aider. It is important that we ascertain whether the student is fit to travel home independently and whether it is desirable to contact parents. No student must leave the premises under any circumstances without first signing out at Reception.

MANAGING MEDICINES IN SCHOOL

Some students have medical conditions that require support so that they can attend school regularly and take part in school activities; others require medication on a temporary basis. The Department for Education has issued guidance to schools regarding the management of medication in schools. Hertfordshire County Council recommends that all their educational establishments follow this guidance; it is part of the Education Health & Safety Manual.

Students with ongoing conditions such as allergies, asthma, diabetes requiring an emergency box must provide an individual health care plan (IHCP) form to the First Aid office. Such students are also required to carry emergency medication on their person. Further information is provided and the form can be downloaded from the school website www.hertsandessex.herts.sch.uk. Beyond the Classroom/Pastoral Care/Health Information section or can be obtained in school from First Aid staff.

If, at any time, your daughter/son needs to take medication during the school day on a short term basis, we are happy to assist, providing that we are in receipt of the appropriate information. This information should be relayed to us on a completed “Parental Agreement for School to Administer Medicine” form. This form can be downloaded from the school website (www.hertsandessex.herts.sch.uk) About/Policies or can be obtained in school from First Aid staff.

We cannot guarantee that medication will be provided to your daughter/son if this information is not received in advance.
PARENTS’ CONSULTATION EVENING

The annual Parents’ Consultation Evening for Year 12 takes place this year on:

Thursday 13 December 2018
5.00 pm - 7.00 pm

Students will be asked to make appointments for you with their subject teachers.

We positively encourage students to accompany their parents on these occasions, as the students are the most vital ingredient of all!

If you wish to make an appointment with Mr Marlow or Mrs Lewis, please telephone Mrs Brady, who will book an appointment for you.

TRACKING, REPORTS and MEETINGS

When can I expect to have a report on how my daughter/son is doing?

We regard the monitoring of students’ progress as an on-going process. However, we take students through a more formal procedure of tracking six times during their courses; four of these take the form of mid-term tracking, and two take the form of the annual school report. On each of these occasions the same procedure is followed:

- Subject teachers have individual discussions with students regarding their effort and achievement; Subject Leaders or Faculty Leaders may also see students should the need arise.

- Form Tutors then have individual discussions with the students in their tutor groups regarding the overall picture of their effort and achievement, as well as such matters as attendance and punctuality.

- Those individuals who have sustained excellent levels of effort, or whose lack of effort is causing general concern, may be seen by Mr Marlow (Year Leader: Year 12 or for Year 13 Mrs Curtis (Sixth Form Learning Manager), or by Mrs Lewis (Director of Sixth Form(Acting)).

Parents will be able to view the results of students’ tracking and the annual report via Firefly.

Where there are matters of concern, contact is always made with parents/carers, by telephone or in writing. Should a student's tracking give cause for concern, we invite parents to come in to school in order to discuss the matter further.

Honour Roll Breakfast

These informal half-hour events are held twice a year to celebrate students’ outstanding achievement, progress or effort. They last about half an hour and take place at 8.00 am, thereby making it easier for parents to attend with a minimum of disruption to the working and school day.
Herts & Essex Sixth Form – Dress Code

The school is noted for the smart appearance of its students and those in the Sixth Form play a leading role in this.

A matching suit or combination of:

Tailored jacket with:
Tailored trousers (not leggings/jeggings)
or
A tailored skirt of at least knee length and not of stretch fabric
or
Smart tailored dress, of at least knee length

These should be in plain business colours (for example black, navy blue or grey) and must be worn with:

For boys: a shirt and tie

For girls: a smart shirt, blouse or top. This must have a sleeve or full shoulder (spaghetti straps or vest tops are not permitted).

Smart dark-coloured, closed-toe shoes or boots (with a low heel for health and safety reasons) which can be polished.

In all respects, formal styles and lengths are required.

In addition:

No facial or body piercings other than earrings are allowed. (Earrings should be small for Health & Safety reasons.)

Tattoos (It is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to have a tattoo, even with parental consent.)

Hair styles and colour should be appropriate for a working environment.

All clothing should be clean and in good repair.

STUDENTS NOT ADHERING TO THE DRESS CODE WILL BE GIVEN A UNIFORM INFRINGEMENT MARK AND MAY BE SENT HOME TO CHANGE.

In cases where there is uncertainty, decisions will be at the discretion of either the Year Leader: Year 12 or the Sixth Form Learning Manager.

Lanyards
Students will be issued with a lanyard in order to identify them as being one of our students and thus having permission to be on our site. They must wear it at all times from the moment they arrive at school to the moment that they leave. If they are seen without it, they will be given a uniform infringement mark. If it breaks or they lose all or part of it, they will be required to pay to replace this. They should go to Reprographics who will advise on cost and availability. If it is forgotten, the student should go immediately to the Sixth Form Office to be issued with a temporary one, which must be returned at the end of the school day or this may be charged for.
I have heard that there is a big leap from GCSE work to advanced level work. Do Year 12 find it easy to settle to A Level work?

The simple answer is that some students do and some don’t. Advanced level work is different from GCSE. Some students focus on their work from the very first day of their courses; others take longer to settle. Those students who settle quickly to their courses stand a much better chance of managing the transition. All students starting A Level courses face the daunting challenge of having to do academic work again after a long gap. The vast majority of students will have done little, if any, academic work since early June. All students have to make a determined effort with their new courses if they are to settle quickly and make progress.

My daughter/son did very well at GCSE but is struggling with A Level courses. What has gone wrong?

This is not easy to answer. Every case is different. We would need to investigate to see what the source of the problem is. In this case, it is a good idea to contact your daughter’s/son’s tutor or subject teachers. Appointments to discuss the difficulty can easily be arranged.

When are students given advice on how to study?

From their first day in September and throughout their time in the Sixth Form, students are given guidance on how to be a successful student by subject teachers and by Sixth Form tutors in the tutorial programme and through the involvement of outside agencies. Experience shows that some students settle quickly into what is required and others take much longer.

Underpinning the work on study skills, lies our aim to make our students independent learners. One of the ‘key skills’ which universities value and employers find highly desirable is the ability to manage your own learning to improve your performance. Universities do not want to have to resort to ‘spoon-feeding’ their students; those students who can take charge of their learning and be proactive and structured in their approach are those who settle most quickly and have an advantage over those who do not really know how to study. Employers look for employees with initiative and the ability to work independently to improve their knowledge and skills. The transition from being a Sixth Form student in a school or college to the world of higher education or the world of work can be very challenging, not least of all in the demands which it places on students to manage their learning.

What topics are covered in our advice on how to study?

Topics covered include:
- Time Management and Planning
- Where to study
- Organising files and study materials
- Taking notes, writing essays
- The importance of a rolling programme of regular revision

Wider reading
- Using a library
- Reading for learning
- Referencing and plagiarism
- Sourcing information
- Critical thinking

How much time should students spend on their school work each week?

As a general guide, we tell all A Level students that they should spend at least six hours a week (per course) studying outside lessons. Of course, more time should be devoted to study as examinations get closer.
Thus, a student who is following three A Levels should be doing at least eighteen hours a week outside lessons. If a student is to achieve this, they are looking at about three hours a day (Monday to Thursday) and six hours over the weekend. This may take many forms, such as a formal essay or assignment, research, wider reading of works by set authors, learning for a test, reading ahead and making notes, consolidating notes taken in class, practical work, revision, preparation for a presentation to be given to the class, or further work on a large coursework project. Subjects with a particularly heavy weighting of coursework such as Art or Music, may have students working on a coursework project for many weeks.

When you look at these guidelines, you will immediately see the implication for recreation and a part-time job.

My daughter/son seems to have to do very little work at home. Why is this?

It is unlikely that work is not set, but it may be that the student has no urgent, pressing work to do, as work is sometimes set in some courses over a longer period than at GCSE. Nevertheless, students should only occasionally have little work to do at home. If a student normally does little work at home, it is likely that the student is in danger of under-achievement. If this is the case, you should contact subject teachers or your daughter/son’s tutor who will investigate the matter.

There is always something that can be done, even if not set as a specific task – reading around the course, ‘rolling’ revision.

My daughter/son does not seem to know what is required of them in their school work. What can I do to help?

All students were issued, at the start of their time in the Sixth Form, with a Student Handbook. This is full of advice about how to achieve well on courses; you could ask your daughter/son to look at the Handbook and take note of the issues raised there. It may well be advisable to get in touch with the subject staff to discuss how they might be helped.

COURSEWORK DEADLINES

Rationale

It must be recognised that time is a factor in the successful completion of a task and that, given unlimited time, any piece of work may be improved further. At school, students are expected to complete all tasks by the stated deadline.

Meeting deadlines for coursework is essential. If a set deadline is not met it:

- reflects poor personal organisation
- is not fair to the students who have met the deadline
- creates time-management problems for students where one missed deadline could cause further missed deadlines in other subjects (domino effect).

Expectations for the meeting of coursework deadlines:

- If a student is absent from school, their coursework must still be submitted before the end of the deadline day – a parent/friend should bring the work to school to hand in at Reception and should sign on submission.
Parents are expected to inform the Year Leader: Year 12 in advance if there are any exceptional circumstances. A medical certificate must be provided if the exceptional circumstances are illness-related.

- If work is not submitted by the set deadline, a mark of zero will be recorded.
- Staff will have set interim deadlines, where appropriate, and these are firmly enforced. Parents will be notified as soon as an interim deadline is missed.

A LEVEL STUDY

Study Leave

In preparation for the examinations students are granted study leave – details of the exact dates will be announced nearer the time.

Considering a change of subject or course

Changing subjects or giving up a subject is a serious matter. There is an initial period of induction in each subject, covering the skills and basic requirements for A Level. Students will not be allowed to change subjects after the deadline of 14 September; beyond this date it would be unfair for a student to face the problem of catching up with all the work missed. However, if a student is considering doing this before the deadline, the following steps should be followed:

- the student should first discuss the matter with the teaching staff of the subject(s) concerned, who will give their professional opinion of the student’s progress and chances of succeeding in their subject(s)
- the student should then think carefully about their reasons for considering changing or giving up the subject, and discuss the matter with Mrs Lewis and parents
- The Careers Co-ordinator, Mrs Curtis and/or Mrs Lewis could be consulted about any possible consequences of this course change with regard to career intentions
- the student should complete a ‘Changing Subject in the Sixth Form’ document, which can be obtained from Mrs Brady
- the student should then see Mrs Lewis about the matter, who will look at the overall picture of the student’s timetable and their record of effort to date
- the student must continue to attend all lessons in the subject until this final stage has been reached

This may seem like a lengthy and involved process, but I am sure you will appreciate that this is not a matter to be taken lightly.

NEGOTIATED FREES

Later in the Sixth Form, if a student has maintained a good record of effort in their academic studies, as well as a good record of attendance and punctuality, we recognise and reward this by awarding the student a period of ‘negotiated free’ time.

This means that the student will be permitted to choose one/two/three period(s) per fortnight (depending on progress and effort) – at the beginning or end of the school day – when they may study off-site. This period(s), once nominated, must remain unchanged for purposes of registration, and the student must sign in if arriving after AM Registration, or sign out if leaving after PM Registration.
Attending a school Sixth Form is not like attending a Sixth Form college; students are in full-time education, which means they should not be appearing home at odd times of the day, apart from the regular weekly Negotiated Free(s), as explained above.

**Can the negotiated free privilege be revoked?**

Yes. Negotiated Frees are a privilege NOT a right. This privilege may be removed if students are not working as they should, or we become concerned about attendance or punctuality.

**PAID EMPLOYMENT**

**What guidance do we give about paid part-time employment?**

Many students have part-time jobs. There is nothing inherently wrong with taking a part-time job as long as the student is sensible over hours of paid work and gives priority to their school work. If the job jeopardises progress in school work, the job should go or the hours should be reduced. Students are told that they have important decisions to make on what is sensible, bearing in mind that they are supposed to be full-time students.

Students are told clearly that they should not regularly work in paid employment on week nights and that working both Saturday and Sunday is a mistake; we can only advise. Sadly, some students ignore this advice. Students are often attracted by the idea of earning money, but they can easily fail to appreciate that a part-time job commitment can have a major impact on their ability to cope effectively with the demands of their Sixth Form courses. Tiredness after late night shifts or after a whole weekend working in a shop is a recipe for underachievement on courses.

Employers often place particular demands on students at busy times of the year, for example, in the Christmas/New Year break when sales and stock-taking are all too common. Students can easily get into difficulties at this time. We hope that parents will support us in encouraging students to keep their hours in perspective even though this can become an area of debate and disagreement.

Students are advised to look ahead, not just at the examination period, but also at the weeks preceding the examinations, and plan how they are going to manage the increased pressures in this period alongside paid employment.

**GUIDANCE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION AND ALTERNATIVES**

**What support do students have when applying to university, college or other options?**

Lots! Students are encouraged to browse through the Careers Library and online throughout Year 12; the Careers Library houses many useful books and leaflets. We subscribe to Unifrog and students will make use of this throughout their time with us.

During Year 12, and particularly in the Summer Term, there are many events designed to help both students and parents prepare for university or apprenticeship applications. Please watch out for announcements of forthcoming events in the Sixth Form Update; Newsletter; Sixth Form area on Firefly and on our website.

I have summarised below some of the main parts of our programme and important dates related to making applications.
It is important to note that, while there is a schedule of guidance on Higher Education and other opportunities in tutorial sessions and special events, the routine contact with tutors, on a daily basis or in the more formal rolling programme of progress interviews after tracking, is of paramount importance throughout the Sixth Form years. We encourage students to keep tutors abreast of their plans. Many apprenticeship and job opportunities are also passed to students through registers, so students need to be proactive and prompt when these opportunities arise.

**Year 12 Spring Term**

Of course, to an extent, guidance begins as soon as students choose advanced level courses in Year 11 and at the beginning of Year 12. More formal guidance begins in the Spring Term of Year 12.

- In November, the idea of applying for places in Higher Education or Apprenticeships is launched. Students will be shown how to use Unifrog.
- During the Spring Term students have the opportunity to attend a Universities and Apprenticeships Fair in order to meet representatives of such institutions.
- Talks on aspects of Higher Education and how to apply.
- Students are made aware of the Higher Education and Apprenticeship resources available online and encouraged to make the best use of them.
- Students are given guidance on Open Days and other opportunities, such as Summer Schools
- Students interested in applying to Oxford and Cambridge are briefed on the two universities and the differences between them.

**Year 12 Summer Term (June/July)**

- Explanation of the UCAS system and the launch of **UCAS Apply**
- Advice on writing a Personal Statement
- During "Futures Week", we expect all students to prepare a draft of their Personal Statement; this may be destined for the UCAS (university) application form, or may be part of an application for employment or an apprenticeship. Students are better prepared to face the UCAS season if they return to school in September of Year 13, having almost completed a Personal Statement
- Register and fill out the online UCAS application
- A talk on taking a 'gap year' and international universities (given by outside agencies).
- Potential applicants to courses with additional tests begin practising for these.

**AGE OF MAJORITY**

During Year 13, most students will become eighteen in that academic year. If parents wish to relinquish such matters as signing reply slips, writing sick notes etc. to their daughter/son for the remainder of their Sixth Form course, this must be done so in writing. I must however point out that this is something we advise against.
PROGRESSION TO YEAR 13

We hope that all our Year 12 students will make sustained progress throughout the year so that they progress successfully to Year 13 and their final examinations.

Monitoring throughout the year of academic progress, attitude to learning, attendance and behaviour will be followed up carefully, and a student's place may be withdrawn if the student is, by reason of her/his conduct, behaviour or progress, unwilling or unable to engage appropriately with the educational opportunities offered at Herts & Essex.

We would expect all students to be tracking at a minimum of three D grades by the end of Year 12.

Year 13

The Autumn Term sees university applications discussed with Tutors and finally submitted. There is then an on-going dialogue between students and Tutors (and Mrs Curtis, Sixth Form Learning Manager or Mrs Lewis, Director of Sixth Form (Acting) and other staff, as necessary) on the progress of applications. There is also specific guidance given on particular topics. The Autumn Term looks something like this:

- September: start of term - continuation of UCAS application period
- September - Oxbridge candidates, potential medics, dentists and vets complete work on their applications with Mrs Lewis (applications must be completed by the end of September)
- September - advice on procedures after the submission of applications
- 28th September – school deadline for Oxbridge, Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science applications
- 15th October – UCAS deadline for Oxbridge, Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science applications.
- 19th October - school deadline for receipt of all other UCAS forms (later for some Art applicants).
- December - Higher Education: Student Financial Support Arrangements

In the Spring Term, there is normally a lot of discussion on responses from universities and colleges and on making decisions on which offers to hold. There is also considerable guidance on many aspects of being a student throughout the Tutorial programme with such topics as:

- Common problems facing students in Higher Education
- Accommodation
- Money Management

The two major components of the UCAS application form are the student's Personal Statement and the school's reference. In order to compile the reference, comments are sought from all of the student's subject teachers; the form tutor collates these and writes the reference, which is vetted by Mrs Curtis.

The reference also contains predicted grades. Naturally, the student's performance in Year 12 examinations will have been part of this procedure. Staff can only predict a particular grade if they have seen the student producing work at that level in a consistent manner over a period of time. Students and parents will already have some idea of what the predicted grades are likely to be from those given on the Year 12 report.
Whilst we would wish to do everything we can to help a student with their university applications, grades - once predicted - are not open to negotiation.

We positively encourage Year 12 students to take part in the many opportunities and activities we offer; it is vital that they are able to present themselves as well-rounded individuals who have much more to offer a university or employer than academic grades. These activities range from helping the school community by taking visitors on guided tours from time to time, to working with junior students in and out of lessons, to full-time involvement in enterprise schemes or the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award.

You may also wish to note the following:

**After the publication of Advanced Level examinations**

Our support of our students does not finish with the advanced level examinations. Sometimes students change their minds about what they want to do after the examinations and we are available to discuss new plans and any difficulties which may arise. Of course, following the publication of the Advanced Level results, we will help where we can if grades are not as students might have expected.

**SIXTH FORM HOME SCHOOL AGREEMENT**

On entry into the Sixth Form students and parents are required to sign an agreement, a copy of which follows. It is designed simply to ensure that, from the outset, students understand what is expected of them. The original version formed part of the Admission Forms provided at the start of the year.
SIXTH FORM HOME SCHOOL AGREEMENT

Membership of The Hertfordshire & Essex High School Sixth Form is conditional upon the acceptance of and adherence to the following regulations.

- Students must attend all timetabled lessons, arriving punctually and with all necessary equipment and materials.
- Students must behave appropriately in all lessons ensuring the most conducive environment for learning.
- Punctual attendance at daily morning and afternoon registration/assembly is compulsory. Students are expected to participate actively in tutor group activities and responsibilities.
- Students must strive to do their best in class work, homework, wider research and private study. At least six hours of private study per subject per week is expected.
- To progress into Year 13, students must continue with a minimum of three A Levels having made sustained progress throughout Year 12. Monitoring throughout the year of academic progress, attitude to learning, attendance and behaviour will be followed up carefully, and a student's place may be withdrawn if the student is, by reason of her/his conduct, behaviour or progress, unwilling or unable to engage appropriately with the educational opportunities offered at Herts & Essex. All students are expected to be tracking at a minimum of three D grades by the end of Year 12.
- Students may only leave the premises at lunchtime or during negotiated frees, unless prior authorisation has been given by the Year Leader; Year 12, or the Sixth Form Learning Manager or the Director of Sixth Form. They must stay on site at all other times.
- Any student leaving the school site for any reason must sign out, and sign in on their return. This is a legal obligation.
- All students must wear their lanyards when on site.
- Leave of absence may be granted for students going to interviews, up to three open days etc. However, they must first print a 'Request for Absence during School Time' form from Firefly, and collect signatures in agreement from each teacher whose lesson will be missed.
- When returning from any period of absence, unless advised in advance, students must give a parental note to their tutor to explain the absence. Parents should also phone the school if a student is going to be absent for more than one day.
- A Book and Equipment Deposit of £20 will be requested, to be paid in cash, against the increasing cost of textbooks and other equipment. After Book Return Day, following the completion of Year 13 examinations, this will be refunded unless books or equipment have not been returned.
- All students must adhere to the Sixth Form Dress Code.
- All students must abide by the conditions of the ICT Code of Conduct.
- Should a student request any alteration to an exam/exam component after the entries have been made, the school reserves the right to require the parents/carers to pay the requisite exam fees.
- Students are encouraged to participate actively in the wider life of the Sixth Form and the school, to be a positive role model, and to uphold the school's ethos at all times. Students must always behave in a courteous and adult manner.

I hereby confirm that I have read and understood the Sixth Form Home School Agreement, and that I accept its conditions. If I do not fulfil the expectations indicated, I may expect one or more of the following sanctions to be applied: a verbal warning; a letter to my parents/carers, which may include a request to attend a formal meeting; being placed 'on report'; withdrawal of privileges; withdrawal from a course; withdrawal of entry for my examinations; exclusion from the Sixth Form for a specified period; permanent exclusion from the Sixth Form.

SIGNED (Student): .................................................................
Print Name: .................................................................

SIGNED (Parent/Carer): .................................................................
Print Name: .................................................................

Director of Sixth Form: ................................................................. Date: ........September 2018
School Term and Holiday Dates - Academic Year 2018/2019

Autumn Term 2018

CPD* Day: Monday 3 September (no students in school)
Begins: Tuesday 4 September - Years 7 and 12
Begins: **Wednesday 5 September** - Years 8 - 11 and 13
Open Evening: Thursday 20 September (school closes 1.30 pm)
CPD* Day: Friday 21 September (no students in school)
Half term: Monday 29 October to Friday 2 November
Open Evening (Sixth Form): Wednesday 7 November (school closes 1.30 pm)
Ends: **Friday 21 December** (school closes 1.30 pm)

Spring Term 2019

CPD* Day: Monday 7 January (Year 11 only in school)
Begins: **Tuesday 8 January**
Half term: Monday 18 February to Friday 22 February
Ends: **Friday 5 April** (school closes 1.30 pm)

Summer Term 2019

Begins: **Tuesday 23 April**
May Bank Holiday: Monday 6 May (no students or staff in school)
Half term: Monday 27 May to Friday 31 May
Awards Evening: Thursday 20 June (school closes 1.30 pm)
CPD* Day: Friday 21 June
(no students in school unless undertaking public exams)
Ends: **Friday 19 July** (school closes 1.30 pm)
CPD* Day: Monday 22 July (no students or staff in school)

**A Level Results’ Day Thursday 15 August**

**GCSE Results’ Day Thursday 22 August**

CPD* = Continuing Professional Development