

# January 2025 Curriculum Update



For all students and parents, information regarding the Spring and Summer terms

- February Mock Exams for 2A A Level and GCSE students
- Structured revision for 2A students
- Transfer Exams for 1A students
- Extra lesson for GCSE Maths students
- Avoiding plagiarism in coursework
- Exam conduct

20<sup>th</sup> January 2025

## Summary of key points

- 2A A Level and AS, and all GCSE students will be sitting Mock Exams between Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February and Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February under full exam conditions with exam access arrangements
- **All registered Pro-Study sessions for all students** (Foundation, 1A and 2A) will be suspended during the week Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February to Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February
- For 2A students only: A Level\*, AS, Core Maths, EPQ and tutorial lessons will be suspended during the week Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February to Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February. All other lessons will continue. *\*excluding A Level Fine Art, Graphics, Textiles and Photography.*
- 2A students will be following structured revision programmes within each of their subjects starting on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February.
- All 1A students following A Level courses will sit Transfer Exams between Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May and Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May
- All students remaining on GCSE Maths will receive an extra lesson per week from Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January
- Students submitting coursework on all courses are reminded to ensure that their work is their own and does not fall foul of plagiarism
- Students are asked to familiarise themselves with exam conduct guidance

Dear students and parents,

As the new year gets underway, we turn our attention to the busy Spring and Summer terms. It is wonderful to see a sense of sharpening focus from students as we enter the season of coursework deadlines and mock exams, with the summer public exams and internal exams just 13 term time weeks away. A busier and more demanding time of year, but with sensible planning, careful preparation and a consistent effort, students should avoid undue pressure. Where students require support in managing this period, they can of course access a range of excellent support via their teachers, tutor and Student Services.

### **2A and GCSE students: February Mock Exams**

All 2A (second year) and GCSE students will be sitting mock exams under full exam conditions, with exam access arrangements for qualifying students, between Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February and Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February. Primarily these mock exams provide students with experience of preparing for and sitting exams in the same format as their final public exams. Papers will be set and marked according to exam board mark schemes, providing students with very useful feedback. To all intents and purposes these mock exams will feel like public exams and therefore provide great practice for the real thing. Secondly, the grades from these mock exams would contribute substantial evidence should a student not be able to sit their public exams in the summer. Students should therefore prepare for these mock exams thoroughly.

February mock results can be found on MyProgress – parents: please encourage your child to share this information with you. MyProgress and MyStudent (Parent Portal) also hold progress review and attendance information. The recent Progress Review 2 grades and studentship scores give a robust indication of where students are in their journey at Collyer's.

2A A Level students will be placed on **study leave** between Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February and Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February **for their A Level** lessons (except for: Fine Art, Graphics, Photography and Textiles), **AS English Language, Core Maths, AS Further Maths, EPQ, tutor group** and **registered Pro Study lessons**. All other lessons will **continue as normal** during this period including Level 3 BTECs and other vocational subjects, T Levels, and GCSEs, students should therefore attend these lessons unless in a mock exam. The following table summarises this paragraph:

Lessons continuing	Lessons suspended
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All 1A A-Level</li> <li>• Level 3 BTEC</li> <li>• Criminology</li> <li>• Music Practitioners</li> <li>• T-Level</li> <li>• All Foundation and 1A Tutorial</li> <li>• All Foundation Level 2 BTEC/vocational</li> <li>• HSLA</li> <li>• Cabin Crew</li> <li>• TASS</li> <li>• Level 2 Work Skills</li> <li>• GCSE English and Maths</li> <li>• Enrichment</li> <li>• A-Level: Fine Art, Graphics, Textiles, Photography</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2A A-Level</li> <li>• EPQ</li> <li>• Core Maths</li> <li>• AS English Language</li> <li>• AS Further Maths</li> <li>• 2A Tutorial</li> <li>• <b>All Pro Study</b></li> </ul>

### **2A students: Structured revision**

Starting on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> of February, all 2A students sitting public exams in the summer will begin structured revision in each of their subjects. The work set for structured revision will be in addition to normal homework and coursework preparation. With only 13 term time weeks before the summer public exams begin, now is the ideal time to start revision in earnest. By structuring students' revision, teachers are setting the pace and expectation of what makes for effective revision. Teachers will provide students with a week-by-week schedule of exactly what they should be revising and how they should practice in preparation for their summer exams. Of course, students may well develop their own revision schedule that sits alongside their structured revision schedule. I do ask that parents help support their student in keeping to the structured revision schedule – it will pay dividends by exam and results time.

As throughout the year, subject workshops will continue where students may be referred and required to attend or attend voluntarily.

### **1A students: Transfer Exams for A Level subjects**

All students currently in their first year, 1A, of A-Levels will sit Transfer Exams in these subjects between Monday 12<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> of May. Students will complete these Transfer Exams under full exam conditions, with exam access arrangements in place for those students who are eligible. 1A students will be placed on study leave from 4:15PM on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May, therefore almost all Transfer Exams will be off timetable. Students will be able to access their Transfer exam schedule using MyProgress shortly.

If a student fails a Transfer Exam, they will be offered a resit on the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> of July, where a pass must be secured for progression to their second year in the relevant subject.

Whilst only a pass is required to proceed to the second year of their courses, students are strongly encouraged to prepare for their Transfer Exams fully. The results students achieve in their Transfer Exams / Transfer Resits make a substantial contribution to their UCAS predicted grades.

### **Vocational and technical students: Why are vocational and technical students not having Transfer or Mock exams?**

Students following vocational (BTEC and Diploma) or technical (T-Level courses) may wonder why they will not be having mock exams in February (2A students) or Transfer Exams in the summer (1A students). The reason is that vocational and technical qualifications have a large coursework component alongside exams that take place during their courses rather

than at the end of their courses as do A Levels and GCSEs. 2A BTEC students completed off timetable mock exams under full examination conditions in November in preparation for their January exams – a time when the majority of BTEC students sit public exams. 1A BTEC, vocational and technical students will have public exams in the summer alongside coursework submission on which progression to the second year of study is judged. As with A Level students, vocational and technical students need to achieve a pass for progression to their second year, though of course they will want to aim far higher.

### **GCSE Maths students**

From Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January, all GCSE Maths students who did not achieve a pass in their November resit will be timetabled for an additional lesson per week until study leave in the summer term. This additional lesson will be within their current GCSE Maths block. This is in response to the Department for Education's push to offer GCSE Maths students more teaching time and will provide our students with extra support to achieve a pass this summer. This extra lesson will be registered and count towards attendance as with all other lessons. Unfortunately, we will not be able to accommodate requests for students to change teaching blocks.

### **All students: Coursework and plagiarism**

Many students across all year groups and qualifications will be submitting coursework over the coming weeks. In the vast majority of cases students complete original coursework of exceptional quality. The skills learned and perseverance demonstrated in preparing large pieces of coursework will serve students for life.

Clear guidance on what constitutes plagiarism will have been given to students by their teachers. Students should be aware of the following:

- All coursework is run through sophisticated anti-plagiarism software.
- Teachers must be confident that the work a student submits is their own.

There are a multitude of methods that students may use to wilfully plagiarise e.g. a Google search for similar coursework, copying a classmate or siblings' coursework, failure to reference correctly, and more recently using AI applications such as ChatGPT. However, please be reminded of the two points above: all coursework will be run through anti-plagiarism software, and additionally teachers must be confident that any work submitted is the student's own work. Do bear in mind that teachers are very adept at spotting writing styles.

In most cases where plagiarism is suspected, Collyer's staff have to report this to the relevant exam board. The penalties for plagiarism are then severe. At minimum a student caught plagiarising can expect to score zero for the plagiarised coursework and not be allowed to resubmit. For example: a student found having plagiarised a piece of coursework worth 20% of their course will receive zero for this work – the student will then only be able to access 80% of the marks of the qualification. It is not uncommon however for an exam board to remove a student entirely from a qualification when plagiarism has occurred.

### **All students: Exam conduct**

For all exams students should be aware of the guidance regarding permitted conduct in exams available on their exams tab of MyProgress. Can I draw particular attention to use of electronic equipment in exams. With the exception of permitted calculators and reading pens, students must not have any prohibited electrical equipment on their person during an exam. Students found with prohibited electrical equipment including mobile phones and smart watches will receive zero marks for that exam even if the device is turned off.

I wish all student the very best for the Spring and Summer terms.

Kind regards,

Rob Hussey

Vice Principal: Curriculum

## Key dates

Term	Event	Year Group	Dates / details
Spring	<b>2A A Level and GCSE February Mocks</b>	2A A-Level students and all GCSE English and Maths students	From Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> to Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> February
	<b>Registered Pro-Study suspended</b>	All students: Foundation, 1A and 2A	All registered Pro-Study will be suspended from Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> to Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> February
	<b>Tutorial</b>	2A and GCSE students	Tutorial sessions will be suspended for 2A and GCSE student <b>only</b> , from Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> to Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> February
	<b>Structured Revision</b>	2A and GCSE – all courses that have public exams in the summer	Starts on Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> February through to the start of the summer exams
Summer	<b>Foundation Study Leave</b>	Foundation students	From Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> May at 4:15PM to Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> June.  Students complete work experience from Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> to Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> June  Students return to college on Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> June.
	<b>1A Study Leave</b>	1A	From Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> May at 4:15PM to Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> June.  Students complete work experience from Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June to Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> June.  Students return to full timetable on Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> June.
	<b>2A Study Leave</b>	2A	From Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> May at 4:15PM.
	<b>Transfer Exams</b>	1A – A Level subjects only	From Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> May to Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> May