



December 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

S5 – S6 ASSESSMENT PERIOD JANUARY 2020

S5 – S6 pupils are about to begin a very important set of assessments, starting on **Friday 10 Jan 2019**. These assessments are important for a number of reasons.

1. They give pupils, parents and teachers a clear indication of likely grades in the final National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher examinations that take place during May - June 2020.
2. They give pupils good practice in studying for and sitting a diet of examinations, which improves their chances of success next summer.
3. They give pupils 'first hand' experience of what it is like to sit an examination under the strict conditions set down by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA).
4. The grades achieved, and examination papers themselves may be used by the school, as evidence to forward to SQA for absentee consideration should a pupil miss an examination through illness.

STUDY LEAVE FOR S5 – S6 PUPILS

Study leave is offered on the understanding that parents/carers ensure pupils use the time well to work at home and prepare for examinations to get the best possible grades. Study Leave may be withheld from pupils who have failed to make satisfactory progress in their courses over the session. Teachers will arrange additional support times with pupils not making satisfactory progress to enable them to catch up on class work, folio work and/or assessments. Should your child fail to attend these prearranged times you will be contacted immediately and unless there is a medical reason for their absence, your child's privilege of Study Leave may be withdrawn.

Study Leave is from **Monday 13 January** to **Friday 24 January** (both dates inclusive). **All Pupils** must return to school on **Monday 27 January**. The final exams of the exam diet are also on **Monday 27 January**.

It is permissible for pupils to stay at home before an examination or arrive at school, **sign in** then go to a study area. At the end of an examination, pupils must either go home or go to a study area. **Pupils must not abuse this privilege by wandering around the community/school prior to or after an examination.**

Normal school dress code applies during the examination period. This is a formal and important occasion and should be reflected in the pupil's dress.

VENUE AND INVIGILATION OF EXAMINATIONS

All examinations will take place within the Alford Community Campus and will be invigilated by the same team of invigilators who work during the actual SQA examinations during May - June. Each invigilator has been through the process of "vetting" carried out by Disclosure Scotland, and relevant details (held by the school) about individual pupil's medical conditions and health will be provided to the Chief Invigilator to ensure that she can carry out her duties with due regard to the health and safety of all pupils.

CONDUCT OF CANDIDATES IN THE EXAMINATION ROOM

The following items **may not** be brought into the examination room. Any candidate found in possession of such items during the examination may have their entry for the examination cancelled. The school does not accept any responsibility for the safety of valuables brought to examinations.

Mobile phones and Smart Watches: These should be left at home. Where a pupil brings a phone or smart watch (at their own risk) it must be turned off and handed to the invigilator prior to the start of the exam.

Calculators: It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that their calculator is permitted for any particular examination, and should confirm with their class teacher what is permissible for each paper.

Other prohibited items include **MP3 players/iPods, pencil cases, calculator cases, notes** or books other than those expressly permitted by the SQA for a given exam. Food is not permitted within the exam venue except by prior agreement with the SQA coordinator. Only water is allowed in examinations, and this must be in a colourless transparent bottle with all labels removed.

It is always surprising how many pupils are not equipped for their examinations. Pupils should ensure they bring blue/black pens, a ruler, pencil, eraser and when necessary a calculator.

Calculators will only be provided by the invigilation team if the calculator you bring develops a fault during the exam.

Lateness and Absence

If, for any reason, a pupil is late for an examination, he/she must report to the main Campus Reception without delay. If your son/daughter is ill and unable to sit an examination please inform the school by telephone before the start of the examination.

MALPRACTICE

Candidates who attempt to gain an award by any form of deceit, or if their conduct is questionable or inappropriate may incur weighty penalties.

Candidates must not take into the examination room any prohibited item, e.g. book, notes or papers of any kind, an unauthorised calculator which contains inadmissible data, mobile or WAP telephones etc. They must not communicate **in any way** with another pupil during an examination or intentionally cause a disturbance in the examination room. They must not submit work which is frivolous, abusive or otherwise offensive.

Candidates will remain in the examination room under the control of the invigilator(s) for the **complete duration** of the examination.

Study Leave Permission

It is essential that we receive permission from you for your child to study at home and greatly appreciate your support in discussing the contents of this letter with your child.

In order that we can monitor the situation satisfactorily please complete the reply slip attached and return it via your child to their Skills Development Tutor **on Tuesday 7 January 2020**, or they may hand it in via the Alford Academy **'drop box' no later than the end of day 7 January**.

On behalf of the staff at Alford Academy, I wish your son/daughter every success and thank you for your assistance in helping him/her prepare for these important assessments.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Struan Gardner', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr Struan Gardner
Depute Head Teacher

Encl Study Leave Letter and Reply Slip

Prelim Timetable (Version 1.0) Please note a personalised timetable will be issued to your child in January which will include seat numbers. Individual times and venues may vary from the timetable issued today. In response to feedback some exam dates in version 1.0 do differ from those previously shared in the provisional timetable.



S5 – S6 STUDY LEAVE REPLY SLIP

Mon 13 January – Friday 24 January 2020 (inclusive)

Paper copies of this form are available at Campus Reception or from outside the SLT Offices. It can also be completed electronically by using the link provided by email.

Pupil's Name _____

Register Class _____

As parent/carer of the above named pupil, I acknowledge

- receipt of the information about the **S5 – S6 JANUARY ASSESSMENT PERIOD 2020**.
- that Study Leave is given on the understanding the time is used by my child at home to prepare for the examinations.
- normal school dress code applies during the examination period
- that should my child fail to attend prearranged support sessions with his/her teacher to catch up on class work, folio work and/or assessments, I will be contacted immediately and unless there is a medical reason for the absence, the privilege of Study Leave will be withdrawn

It is my wish that my son/daughter

Tick

a) takes advantage of the leave to study at home

Or

b) does not take advantage of Study Leave and attends school each day during the period of Study Leave

Signature of Parent/Carer _____

Date _____

*** Please respond electronically or return Reply Slip on or before Tuesday 7 January 2020 ***