

10th Feb 2022

Dear Parents/ carers,

I hope this email finds you and your loved ones well.

Please find some information on upcoming key events.

Year One Students:

Work experience/ summer scheme opportunities

As part of a package of progression events in the summer we are planning work experience for our first year students. We recognise that many will now have experience of the world of work through part-time jobs, so understand what working life is all about. However, they may not have been able to delve into the career path they might want to pursue, or you may have no idea what their chosen career path might be - so these events will give them opportunities to explore.

There will be a number of times in the summer term that work experience can be arranged, Week beginning 27th June, w/b 11th July, w/b 5th September.

Students need to arrange a work experience placement, either independently or supported by the Careers Department. In the first instance they have been asked to complete a Google form emailed to them. ALL first year students must return their form by the 25th February. Whilst the college will do its best to find a placement for you, we cannot guarantee to do so. The exact placement will be dependent upon employer availability and could range from 2-3 days in person, or a day workplace seminar, summer schemes or an online virtual experience.

Parents Consultations

Our Parents Consultation Evenings for Year 1 and Pre-Advanced students are taking place online on Wednesday 23rd February for students with surnames (A - K) and Thursday 3rd March for students with surnames (L - Z) and appointments can be made between 5pm - 8pm. The booking system is now live with appointment slots of 10 minutes available for all academic subjects. Instructions on how to book an appointment can be found [here](#).

We hope you will find the online Parents Consultation useful, providing an opportunity to discuss any academic concerns with subject teachers.

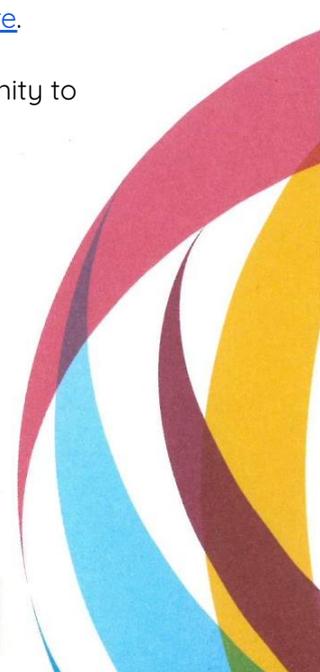
PROGRESSIVE DISTINCTIVE SUCCESSFUL

Surrenden Road
Brighton
East Sussex
BN1 6WQ

t: 01273 508011
e: office@varndean.ac.uk
w: www.varndean.ac.uk

twitter.com/varndean
facebook.com/varndean

Principal: Donna-Marie Janson



Year 2 and GCSE Students:

Practice exams week 2 for GCSE and A level year 2 students

Practice exams week 1 which took place week commencing 31st January 2022 went well with students working hard to ensure they were well prepared. A reminder that students who missed an exam due to illness or self isolation will need to contact their subject teachers so they can be booked into the mop up exams taking place in the week after February half term. A reminder that practice exams week 2 will take place week commencing 28th March 2022.

Summer exams-Pre release Information

On Monday 7th February advanced information about GCSE and A level exams were published by the various exam boards, as promised by the government earlier in the year. This information is there to assist teachers and students prepare for the summer examinations to compensate for the disruption to learning caused by the Covid pandemic.

Ofqual, the Government organisation that regulates examinations and qualifications have produced the following summary [here](#) where you can find some more detail about the process, you can also access a link to the Government website for further specific information.

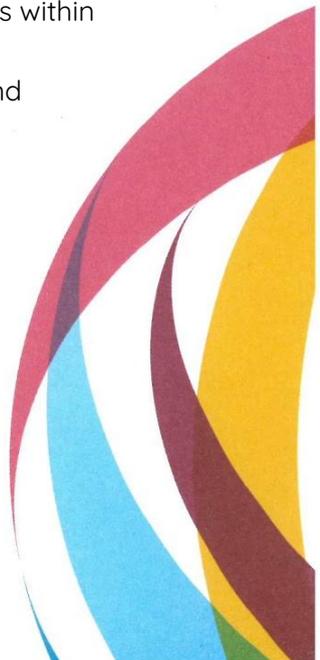
The advanced information is public information and can be found on the AQA, OCR, and EDUQAS websites if you wish to peruse yourselves. Any specific subject questions should be directed towards teachers in the first instance. Our teachers have a twilight INSET today in order to best plan how to make the most out of this information.

All students:

Spring Report Card

The spring Report Card will be published on Monday 21st February on MyVarndean for students and through [our Varndean Parent Portal](#) for Parents and Careers. If parents are yet to register for the parent portal then please do so via our [website](#).

This will be the 2nd report card of the year and will indicate the progress of learners within three areas; Engagement in Learning, Independent Learning and Overall progress. Definitions of these measures can be found within the report cards. You will also find feedback from teachers on how further progress can be achieved.



All learners will now have a “minimum target grade” and a “working at grade” for each of their subjects. The minimum target grade has been statistically generated from GCSE performance using national data. If a student has a working at grade that is higher than the minimum then this would indicate that current performance is above national benchmarks.

For our Year 2 A level and GCSE students the result of the recent mock exams will have contributed to the current working at grade.

We hope you will find the Report Cards useful. If you experience any technical issues then please do contact [our IT Support team here](#) and we will do our best to help

Learning coaches

Our learning coaches are well underway with supporting those students whose' learning was impacted by the pandemic. We have already invited specific students to workshops and we will write to you individually if your child has been identified as needing support and is not attending. I would encourage you to support your child in coming to these sessions. They are very valuable and delivered by subject specialists and are in effect free tutoring. At the minute there are still a good number of spaces. If you would like your child to access support please let us know on: parents@varndean.ac.uk.

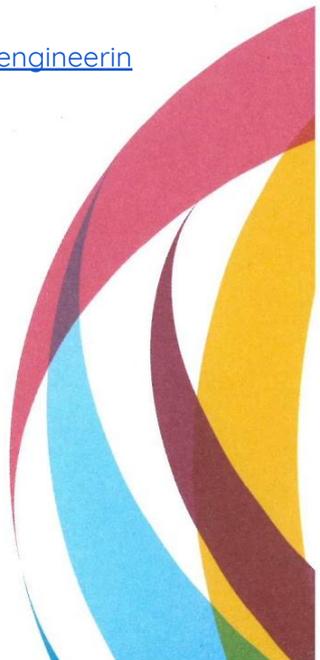
Transport and parking

As previously mentioned Brighton and Hove Council have brought into effect parking restrictions in Surrenden Road where the college is adjacent to and there is permit parking only between 9 and 10 and 2 and 3pm. As such students who drive to college will need to park further away. There are several streets with unrestricted parking very close by. Please see the map for areas close to us:

https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/parking-zones?field_zone_id_value=10#map

As there are rail replacement buses on the routes between Three Bridges & Brighton and Three Bridges & Lewes. for the week after half term, (21st-25th February) we will not be using the Late mark for lessons that week. I would advise students to allow extra time to come into college. Please find more information here:

<https://www.southernrailway.com/travel-information/plan-your-journey/planned-engineering-work?date=2022-02-21#engineering-departure-board>



I would like to thank you once again for your continued support, especially during some disruption caused by the number of covid cases in our staff body. I do get specific requests for our Covid stats so please find them as follows: The number of students who have been confirmed positive this half term is 268 students and the number of members of staff is 19. If your loved ones or you are in these numbers please accept our heartfelt well wishes.

Finally, wishing you all a healthy and happy half term.

Best wishes,

Donna-Marie Janson

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