



Sixth Form

At The Elmgreen School

We look after ourselves • We look after each other • We look after our school • We look after our community

Year 13 Newsletter

June 2020

Friday 20 March was just 10 weeks ago now but it oddly feels like a much longer period has passed. In terms of government reform and policy making, what would have normally taken years to implement has been done in a much shorter time! There has been so much change and uncertainty for everyone, even senior government ministers seem a little confused.

Against the backdrop of the worst pandemic the world has ever seen, this past week we have also seen demonstrations and protests across the globe in support of the Black Lives Matter movement following the brutal killing of George Floyd. This past week more than ever has been a period of reflection for so many across the globe about their stance on anti-racism. Your position as students during this time echoes what I said during your farewell assembly. You are the historymakers. The great leaders of the civil rights movements and women's liberation movements of the 1960's and 1970's were the children of the world wars. They too experienced a world of uncertainty, turmoil and destruction and they used this to fuel their desire for a more fair and equal society. This time has highlighted for so many people what is truly important and how to make the best of a situation. We should all look forward to September and the future with hope. Whatever the future might hold and whatever difficult decisions have to be made, I know that you will make a better future.

Ms West, Head of Sixth Form

It has been great catching up with those I have spoken to and pleasing to hear that you are keeping yourselves safe and well at this difficult time. Naturally, these last 10 weeks since it became clear that examinations would not take place have not been easy. Without classes and homework submissions, which represent the bulk of school life, it does certainly feel like its over! I want to remind you that you are still part of the Elmgreen School community and our support will continue beyond those exciting next steps you are all looking to take. On my part, I am still sharing resources and opportunities on Google Classroom and so I hope that you check in regularly for the latest news. In the classic Mr Sandoe fashion, I am also thinking of a virtual quiz for all Year 13. I would need two enthusiastic and engaging quizmasters to run this however, as Rosa-Lily once told me my voice sent her to sleep...

Mr Sandoe, Head of Year 13

Ofqual Updates

The government said from the beginning that those students who are not satisfied with their predicted grades will have the option to retake them. Understandably, this raised a number of questions;



- *When would these resits take place?*

Current guidance from Ofqual is suggesting these will take place in the Autumn and that Universities will be encouraged to be flexible in their start dates to accommodate this. This could mean that students take their A Level retakes at University, or start University once the examinations have taken place in Autumn. Further updates from Ofqual will bring more clarity for how this will impact students.

- *If students do worse than their predictions, which grade will stand?*

The update on May 5th, indicated that the higher of the two grades will be used for future progression. If students were predicted a B and achieved a C in autumn, the B grade (since it is higher) will remain on their record.

- *When will the results be released?*

The plan will be that the retake results will come out around Christmas time.

- *Will students be able to take all of their exams?*

Currently, it is not clear that all subjects will have the option to sit exams. This should be clearer in Ofqual's next report.

If you wish to read the latest report yourself, here it is:

[Summer 2020 Guidance](#)



If you received any of your offers after 31st March, your deadline remains as

Thursday 18 June 2020.

Gap years and Deferral – ideas and things to think about

Deferring going to university until 2021 is under consideration by many of you. A gap year offers you the opportunity to gain skills and experiences, while giving you time to reflect and focus on what you want to do next.

- A productive gap year can be valuable on your CV – many employers value the experiences students have gained if they’ve actively managed their time, set themselves goals, and stretched themselves.
- A gap year can also enhance your higher education studies – if you decide to apply for uni, you could tailor your gap year to relate it to the subject area you plan to study.
- Admissions tutors know that some students may take a little time to adjust to studying again, but many former gap year students are generally more focused and responsible.

Why do you want to take a year out?

- have a break from study
- gain new skills/experiences
- earn money
- spend time deciding what you want to do
- do a combination of the above



A year out isn’t an option that suits everyone – for some, it may be advisable not to take a break between studies. Here are some pros and cons to consider:

Pros	Cons
<p><i>Build experience</i> - Students might gain employment in the industry they wish to study in. A break from studying might be what is needed to return refreshed. You can volunteer, get valuable work experience, and travel the world.</p>	<p><i>Fewer job opportunities</i> - There could be fewer job opportunities and less job security due to the risks of drifting in and out of lockdown</p> <p>It can be harder to return to study or work after a year-long break</p>

<p><i>Save money</i> - Students can build a reserve to finance them during university to study the following year.</p>	<p><i>Travel restrictions</i> - Barriers to travel will make travelling the world difficult. Further to this, the potential to have to quarantine between locations would be an inconvenience.</p>
<p><i>Online lectures</i> - It is likely that universities will deliver online lectures for at least the first term of university. Deferring may mean that your first year of university is not spent remotely learning.</p>	<p><i>University support</i> - Universities are under pressure to continue to deliver a high quality education and are therefore putting things in place to ensure students receive the necessary support in their studies.</p>
<p><i>Retaking examinations</i> - Students retaking would not have to simultaneously focus on the start of their degree and revision</p>	<p>Some people find a year out becomes a distraction from their longer term plans. It can be expensive and you could find yourself in a worse financial position at the end.</p>
<p>A productive gap year can be valuable on your CV.</p>	<p>An unstructured year out may not add much value to your future – careful thought and planning is essential. If you don't get organised, you may end up spending your gap year just 'thinking about it'.</p>

It is worth mentioning that those who did not state they were going to defer in their original UCAS applications can be refused deferral by their chosen university.

More information can be found here:

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/gap-year>

Communication is key

Tutors and the sixth form team have been making phone calls to all students and families to ensure that you are all well and will answer any questions that you might have.

If you have any questions please email sixthform@the-elmgreen-school.org.uk and a member of the team will get back to you.

Retake Support

For students wishing to take their examinations in Autumn, please express this on the Google Forms survey that will be published on the Year 13 2019-2020 Google Classroom group. This survey will seek to ascertain the number of students seeking to continue their studies for each course. Following this, we will put a plan together for how to support Year 13 in their continued studies. This support could manifest itself in the following ways;

- Weekly Google Meets catch up sessions (30 minutes) June/July
- Online PPE
- Revision Resource Pack

Student Accommodation

You must ensure that you have applied for accommodation for your Firm choice university. For some further thoughts on the accommodation options available to you then read the guide from [Prospects: What you need to know about student accommodation](#)

Academic Preparation for University

UCL are running a 'Study Prep' course for Year 13s to help them prepare for going to University. The course is open for all students regardless of which University they are looking to attend. Guidance on how to apply to this is linked [here](#).

Results Day

Results day 2020 will be on Thursday 13th August 2020. We are awaiting government guidance on gatherings to decide on the final format of the day but more information will be provided closer to the time.

If there are any students who wish to appeal their results after receiving them, Ofqual announced that they are working with exam boards to devise new arrangements for the appeals process. Again, we are awaiting guidance.



Year 13 Online Learning Tasks

Below you will find some suggested online courses, podcasts and reading tasks for your A level subjects. You will also find general courses for study skills. Choose any of the following courses, podcasts, lectures or articles that might be of interest. You may wish to undertake an online course that is directly relevant to your chosen degree or apprenticeship or a course that is of interest.

Subject Areas	Year 13 Online Learning Tasks
Art	<p>Something to listen to: National Gallery Online Lectures</p> <p>Online courses: Introduction to Creative AI Pictures of Youth: An Introduction to Children's Visual Culture</p>
Biology	<p>Online courses: COVID-19: Pandemics, Modelling, and Policy</p> <p>Something to listen to: The Natural Selection Podcast Infinite Monkey Cage Project Podcast Horizons</p>
Business	<p>Something to listen to: Is the UK up for sale? Podcast</p> <p>Something to read: www.bbc.co.uk/news/business 'The Undercover Economist' by Tim Harford is an easy read. The book (or audiobook) is broken into chapters and you don't need to read the lot in one go.</p>
Chemistry	<p>Something to listen to: Royal Society for Chemistry Podcast (click here)</p> <p>Something to read: Royal Society of Chemistry</p>
Computer Science	<p>Something to listen to: Infinite Monkey Cage Project Podcast</p> <p>Online course: Introduction to Creative AI How To Start Your Career In Games Development</p>
Drama	<p>Something to listen to:</p>

	Frantic Assembly's digital library ; arguably the best theatre company in the world! Watch Shakespeare's chilling Scottish tragedy Macbeth realised by Emmy-winning magician Teller (of Penn & Teller); a startling, supernatural show brimming with magic, mayhem, and madness
Economics	Online course: Global Prosperity Beyond GDP Challenging Wealth and Income Inequality
English Literature	Online course: A-level Study Boost: Unseen Poetry and the Creative Process Something to listen to: BBC The Verb
Health and Social Care	Online Course: The NHS Explained: How the Health System in England Really Works Managing Change in a Healthcare Environment
History	Online courses to complete: Learning from the Past: A Guide for the Curious Researcher Beyond the Ballot: Women's Rights and Suffrage from 1866 to Today
Mathematics	Something to listen to: The Secrets of Mathematics Podcast
Media	Something to listen to: BBC iPlayer has two excellent set of resources which explore different genres. The first is Inside Cinema: For Movie Fans ; 35 short episodes, each focusing on a different code or convention. Mark Kermode's Secrets of Cinema ; a series of 5 episodes, each focusing on a different genre.
Philosophy	Something to listen to: Thinking Out Loud: leading philosophers discuss topical global issues
Physics	Something to listen to: The Natural Selection Podcast Infinite Monkey Cage Project Podcast
Product Design	Online course: Modern Building Design
Psychology	Something to listen

	<p>'PsychCrunch' The British Psychological Society research digest podcast (click here)</p> <p>Online courses:</p> <p>Young People and Their Mental Health What are the most common mental health problems, what can you do about them and how do you improve your mental health?</p> <p>Forensic Psychology: Witness Investigation Discover how forensic psychology helps obtain evidence from eyewitnesses in police investigations and prevents cases of injustice.</p>
Sociology	<p>Something to listen to: Thinking Aloud BBC Sounds have several podcasts that explore real-life crimes. This can be found on their true crime page (click here)</p> <p>Online course: Make Change Happen Football: More than a Game Challenging Wealth and Income Inequality</p>
Spanish	<p>Something to listen to:</p> <p>Listen to a Spanish radio station Cadena Dial (https://play.cadenadial.com). This station plays only Spanish music with plenty of current pop songs</p> <p>Online course: Getting to Know Catalonia: An Introduction to the Catalan Language, Culture and Society</p>
General Courses	<p>Online courses to complete: Critical Thinking at University: An Introduction Prepare for Career Success at University</p>



Google Classroom

Accessing School Work - Year 13

Year 13 - to help students get ready for university entry and to have an option to take an exam in 2021, staff will be setting work so you can complete the specification. Please email the sixthform@the-elmgreen-school.org.uk if you have any questions or specific support with this.

Google Classroom and Show my Homework are the main platforms for accessing school work from your subject teachers. Please log in regularly.



Free School Meals (FSM)

You need to be registered for Free School Meals to receive them. If you think you qualify but haven't previously applied then apply here: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

When you receive official notification that you **qualify** (not that you have applied) then we will be informed and we will add you to the list.

Useful links to support your Health & Wellbeing

Joe Wicks - 9am every morning on [here](#)

Mental Health support provided here: [Young Minds](#) and [Kooth](#)

Meditation and sleep : <https://www.headspace.com/>

Relax - mindfulness and meditation app : <https://www.calm.com/signup-flow>



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