



BRIDGE OF DON ACADEMY

Be Caring Be Honest Be Respectful Be Your Best

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Dear Parent and Pupil

S4 to S6 Study Leave - Scottish Qualifications Authority Exams 2019

The 2019 SQA exam diet begins on Thursday 25 April 2019. All pupils in S4, S5 and S6 are given a period of study leave to allow them to prepare thoroughly for SQA examinations.

(a) Key Dates

Tuesday 23 April 2019:	Study leave begins at lunchtime for S6 pupils and at 3.55pm for S4/S5 S6 Leavers' Lunch (see section H below)
Thursday 30 May 2019:	New S5 induction
Friday 31 May 2019:	New S6 induction Last day of study leave
Monday 3 June 2019:	New timetable begins
Tuesday 6 August 2019:	Exam results arrive by post and electronically via text and e-mail

(b) Study Leave Arrangements

Study leave provides pupils with the opportunity to make final preparations for examinations and assessments, taking responsibility for their learning by having a regular routine of study each non-exam day. Advice on revision strategies has been discussed at assemblies and is available on the school website.

Pupils are expected to be in full school uniform when in school, for exams, private study and meeting with teachers. Pupils should bring their own notes and study materials. Some subject departments may make arrangements for pupils to come into school to do specific pieces of work or to practice skills needed in the examinations.

Pupils are reminded that they should not distract others while studying in school. In addition, the school canteen is not to be used as a study or social area. Anyone in the canteen, other than at break or lunch, will be asked to leave the school grounds.

(c) Exam Arrangements, Lateness and Ill Health

All candidates will receive an individual timetable for the examinations with details including times, examination room and candidate number. This information may be updated between the printing of the timetable and the day of the exam. Updates will be displayed on the exam noticeboard. It is important that pupils check all information carefully and be aware of the date, time and rooming arrangements for each of their examinations. Start and finish times of all exams may vary from those on the SQA website.

Pupils should arrive at the exam room 15 minutes before the exam for registration and to allow a smooth and organised start. In the event of problems with the school buses the driver or transport company will normally contact the school and appropriate action will then be taken by the Chief

Invigilator which may include a delayed start. Unfortunately, exams cannot be delayed for late pupils who make their own way to school or rely on public transport.

Pupils who are late are allowed entry up to 30 minutes after the start, except for exams where pupils are listening to audio recordings, for example, music or modern languages. In these situations, no access is permitted.

Pupils are allowed to leave an exam 30 minutes after the start, with the exception of exams lasting an hour or less in which case all pupils are required to remain in the room for the duration of the exam.

It is essential that the school is contacted immediately if a pupil is unwell on the day of an exam and unable to attend. A medical certificate is always required in such cases for an exceptional circumstances appeal. See *Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service* under section G below.

(d) Exam Conduct

Pupils must bring all necessary equipment such as pens, rulers and calculators, where permitted, for each exam. Please note that gel pens and pencils should **not** be used. Most exam papers are scanned for electronic marking and papers written using gel pen or pencil will not scan properly.

The SQA have strict rules about the following list of items which must **not** be taken into the examination room:

- Mobile telephones
- Smart watches, MP3 players or any other similar item capable of storing data
- Calculators containing inadmissible data
- Calculator cases
- Spellcheckers (except where these are permitted for certain candidates)
- Pencil cases
- Books, notes, sketches, bits of paper of any kind, or any other unauthorised aid
- Pupils must also ensure they have nothing written on their hands or arms.

A pupil will be told to leave the exam if an invigilator is made aware of any of the above items in their possession. A report will be sent by the Chief Invigilator to the SQA which is likely to result in a pupil receiving no marks for that exam.

Any of the above items, including mobile phones and smart watches must be left in lockers or kept with the school office where envelopes will be provided to put mobile phones into.

Improper conduct or a disturbance of the exam will result in a warning on the first occasion and being asked to leave if there is a repeat occurrence. In some circumstances, the pupil may be asked to leave on the first occasion. Again a report will be sent by the Chief Invigilator to the SQA and pupils who are guilty of improper conduct will gain no marks for that exam. Examples of improper conduct are:

- Misuse of examination material (including question papers, stationery, etc)
- Use of unauthorised materials in the examination room
- Copying from another candidate
- Collusion - working with another candidate on a task
- Disruptive behaviour in the examination room
- Sitting an examination for someone else
- Using inappropriate, offensive or obscene words or drawings in examination answer books or coursework.

If a pupil is reported for the use of any unauthorised aid and/or improper conduct on more than one occasion, they may be awarded no marks for all of their exams.

Pupils will be encouraged by the invigilators to stay for the entire duration of the exam to allow them to do themselves justice.

(e) Exams Finishing Beyond The End Of The School Day

Unfortunately, school transport companies are not contracted to provide transport home for school bus pupils outside the normal school hours.

(f) Post Study Leave

During the last week of study leave, all pupils permitted to return for a Fifth or Sixth year must return to school. New S5 pupils are expected to attend on Thursday 30 May. School uniform is not required on this day.

Pupils returning for a sixth year must attend on Friday 31 May which will begin at the school before moving on to the Holiday Inn Express where a buffet lunch will be provided at a cost £5 a head, payable by each pupil. S6 pupils will also vote for the new Head and Depute Head Students and for House Captain. School uniform is not required on this day.

Classes will resume on Monday 3 June with new timetables issued at registration. Allowances will be made that day for pupils who do not have appropriate equipment with them, eg PE kit.

A reminder to previous communication that the school blazer for pupils who are continuing their education at Bridge of Don Academy in S5 and S6 can be bought locally at Abstitch, Aberdeen Embroidery Company Ltd, 35 Ann Street, Aberdeen, AB25 3LH, telephone 01224 639152. We will also arrange a one hour visit by staff from Abstitch during study leave for anyone who wishes to come into school to be measured for their correct size. This will be posted on the school website and in Google Classroom.

(g) Exam Results & SQA Results Service

This year's SQA examination results will be released on Tuesday 6 August. The results will arrive by first class post and by text or e-mail if pupils have registered for this service through MySQA. Details of the service are available online at: <https://www.mysqa.org.uk>. Pupils are strongly advised to sign up for this service in the event that certificates do not arrive or are sent to the wrong address.

In 2014, the old 'appeals process' was replaced by the SQA with a new Results Service. This is explained on our website under Pupils > Exams but the changes removed the possibility of pupils appealing for an upgraded mark through the submission of additional pupil evidence once their results have been published.

Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service

If a pupil is unable to sit an exam for reasons such as a family bereavement, serious illness, or other domestic circumstances, parents should contact the school immediately.

Where exceptional circumstances have affected a pupil, the school will then submit details to SQA for 'Exceptional Circumstances Consideration'. In such cases, the school will forward alternative pupil evidence to SQA to support the request for a qualification to be awarded. Parents and/or pupils should notify the school within 3 days of the exam in question as this specific service is time-limited. It should be pointed out that any award granted may not be the same as that estimated by the school.

Post Results Service

The Post Results Service may be used where the grade awarded is significantly different from that expected. However, schools can no longer send any evidence to appeal a pupil's awarded grade once the results have been issued. Only two options are available:

- i) Clerical Check - A clerical check is a check that all questions have been marked and all marks totalled correctly and does not apply to exams which are electronically marked.

- ii) **Marking Review** - A marking review is where an SQA senior examiner will review the marks awarded to each question in the exam and other externally assessed components to ensure that the marking is in line with national standards, correctly totalled and uploaded to the SQA's results system.

SQA make it clear that either of these can only be considered where there is *clear and compelling evidence that a pupil has consistently performed at a higher level through the academic year*. If there is evidence from assessments or classwork that show the pupil has not performed at a consistently high level, and has indeed produced work at a similar grade to the final award, a review will not be requested.

Pupils whose marks are just below a grade boundary cut-off are automatically checked as part of the SQA's quality assurance process. A review, therefore, will not be submitted for pupils who have just missed out on a higher grade.

In the unlikely event that a request is agreed, pupils and parents must give written consent for the submission to be made with the understanding that any changes could mean the pupil's grade can be downgraded as well as up.

Note that the decision to ask the SQA for a marking review rests entirely with the school. Decisions about the grade awarded will be made solely on the pupil's performance in the SQA examination.

(h) S6 Leavers

A special lunch for the current S6 will take place at 12.30pm at the Holiday Inn Express on Tuesday 23 April 2019. It will be an opportunity to reflect on the past six years that the pupils have spent at Bridge of Don Academy and give time to celebrate their achievements in a positive way.

In previous years, some sixth year pupils have caused disruption to learning and teaching, vandalised school property and even caused offence and upset to staff at the school on their last day.

Any pupil intent on causing disruption will be given a Leaver's Form and asked to leave the premises immediately. That pupil will only be allowed to return to school to sit their exams and will not be allowed to attend the Leavers' Lunch nor the School's Award Ceremony at the Beach Ballroom. If the pupil persists in trying to cause disruption, then they will not only collect a Leaver's Form but will also have all their exams cancelled with no opportunity to sit them elsewhere. The police will be contacted if necessary.

Finally, we wish all our pupils every success in their examinations. We hope they will use study leave sensibly and take the opportunity to be fully prepared for their exams.

Yours sincerely

Mr M Jamieson
Depute Head Teacher