

October 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians:

GCSE Coursework Deadlines: UPDATE (some deadlines may have changed)

As we informed you last year, for most GCSE subjects, students are set coursework that counts towards their final GCSE marks. Each department administers and marks their coursework independently, but, to avoid overloading students with too much coursework at any one time during their Upper Senior year, the school has coordinated deadlines in the table, on the reverse.

The best way to manage deadlines is for students to start on coursework when it is set rather than leave it to the last minute. Students will be expected to complete coursework in lessons or normal prep times without needing to encroach upon the lesson or prep time of other subjects. Each department will specify its own deadlines more accurately within the times shown and pupils will be expected to meet these.

Deadlines are set for the following reasons:

- To ensure that the work does not drag on too long for the student (it is only worth a percentage of the overall mark and time needs to be preserved for exam preparation);
- To give staff time to mark and moderate work;
- To allow leeway in case of unforeseeable emergencies such as illness (computer or printer failure does not count as an emergency: contingency plans should be made in advance).

Deadlines must be adhered to except in the case of unforeseeable emergencies.

Subject staff are required to moderate coursework marking and have to plan moderation meetings – sometimes with other schools - during the year. For this reason there has to be a **cut off point beyond which no coursework can be accepted for any reason whatsoever** (Note: for some subjects, the deadline and cutoff date are the same). Since this cut off point is often after the deadline there should be time to sort out emergencies should they arise around the time of the deadline. It is an important point of each child's learning that they take on the responsibility for meeting deadlines. At most universities the cut off point is the deadline and is rigorously enforced to the minute. **Students must work towards the deadline not towards the cut off point** which is a last resort for emergencies only.

Yours faithfully

Suzanne Hall
Assistant Head