6 September 2013

To Parents/Carers of all students in Year 13

We would like to welcome all year 13 students to this new, and their final, school year. Now that students have successfully completed their AS Level courses it is an appropriate time to write to you and explain the arrangements for Year 13.

**Progress and Support**

We fully recognise the efforts and the outcomes that students achieved at AS Level. It is important that all students reflect carefully on their individual results profile and establish a suitable strategy through seeking appropriate guidance from their teachers. In our experience, the majority of students respond positively to advice and improve their performance in the final year at school. It is important to note, with the loss of the January external exams, that students must adopt a long term strategy of resit preparation, if they intend to boost their performance by retaking AS modules in the summer. Traditionally students would retake some modules in January, but this is no longer possible due to the national removal of the January examination series.

Given the loss of January exams it is crucial that careful monitoring takes place throughout Year 13. Key dates for this year include:

- Thursday 26 September at 7.00pm: Parents' Welcome Evening
- Tuesday 1 October at 7.00pm: Parent Consultation Evening
- Friday 25 October: Progress and Effort Grades
- Friday 10 January: Progress and Effort Grades
- Monday 10 February: Internal exam week
- Friday 14 March: Progress and Effort Grades
- Friday 23 May: Leavers Assembly/Ball & Stand Down
- Monday 2 June: A2 Exams Commence

The form tutor should always be the first point of contact for any pastoral concerns for students. Parents/carers may also wish to note that there is a weekly service in which the school nurse provides a confidential drop-in service for students. In these cases, matters can be discussed which may not necessarily relate to academic study.

**UCAS**

Students who elect to apply to university will do so in the course of this term. It will be an online application overseen by the Sixth Form team. As you are aware, time in the summer term was dedicated to preparation for this process. It is crucial that students make appropriate course choices in line with their predicted grades and which match their personal preferences. Students will shortly begin discussions with their teachers regarding their UCAS Predicted grade which will form part of their application.

We would like to make you aware of important dates for the submission of applications by the students to the school.

- Monday 23 September, for applicants to Oxbridge, Medical, Dental and Veterinary Schools, in order that we can meet the specific deadline set by UCAS.
- Friday 8 November for all other applicants.
Throughout this process students should routinely check their school email, communication via the school bulletin and the flat screens in Sixth Form.

The school has a dedicated careers advisor to the Sixth Form who is available to discuss higher education options and career opportunities for all students. Appointments can be made with Mrs Garnett via seg@harrogategrammar.co.uk or 01423 535224.

As you will be aware, there were significant changes to university tuition fees, effective from 2012. The following website offers useful information and guidance.

https://www.gov.uk/browse/education/student-finance

To clarify these issues, we will host a Student Finance talk for parents in the Spring term and will write to you of the particulars of this event in due course.

Sixth Form Bursary
Students may apply for a bursary which aims to help and support students who face the greatest barriers to learning. To find out if your son/daughter might be eligible, and how to apply, please consult the school website or contact Mrs Reed at Sixth Form Reception.

Routines and Expectations
The new academic year might also be an appropriate time to remind you of the high expectations we have of all our sixth form students.

- We look for high levels of attendance throughout and will contact you if there is an unexplained absence.
- If at all possible, medical and dental appointments need to be made outside school time.
- Students register daily with their tutor at 8.50am.
- Please call Mrs Reed (01423 535236) or email tar@harrogategrammar.co.uk before 10am in the case of illness so that staff can be informed.
- If a student is ill during the school day, they must come to Sixth Form Reception and an assessment will be made as to whether they should remain in school.
- It is important in this crucial year that students do not take on excessive commitments out of school that are likely to impinge on their study time.
- Students are issued with an ID badge and this must be visibly worn at all times to help safeguard all members of our community.
- Students are expected to follow the dress outlined in the handbook available online.

We value your continuing support in helping us to maintain these high standards.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to invite you to an information evening on Thursday 26 September, in which we hope to clarify the information within this letter and address any queries that you may have. The event will be held from 7.00pm -8.00pm in The Forum. Please email sixthform@harrogategrammar.co.uk to confirm your attendance.

We look forward to working with you and your son/daughter in a way that best serves their interests and effectively shapes their future.

Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you require any information throughout the year via 01423 535235 or via sixthform@harrogategrammar.co.uk

Mr N Renton
Head of Sixth Form
Deputy Head Teacher