



## **Weekly Bulletin for Braintree Sixth Form Students, Parents and Carers Friday 24 April 2020**

This has been a start to the Summer term like no other – Year 12 should have had their internal exams this week, and at this stage Year 13 would normally be filling the library workspaces and using free classrooms and the common room as they completed their revision. We are all adjusting to the process of working remotely and ask you to be as proactive as you can if there are any issues or concerns. We welcome your feedback on this.

Next Tuesday would have seen us say a formal goodbye to Year 13 students in a final assembly. As we cannot meet in person at the moment, Mr Nitsche has gone the extra mile and there will be a 'virtual final assembly' for you on Tuesday morning. We will email you with details of how you can view the assembly on Tuesday. We do very much look forward to seeing you in person in due course.

### **Learning Remotely**

While the closure continues, Year 12 students will be set work on Edulink by teachers. Please do email teachers if you have any queries or questions and make sure you are submitting work when you are asked to do so.

Additionally, tutors will be contacting Years 12 and 13 tutees fortnightly as part of our duty of care to all students. They will do this initially by email – please do check your emails and reply to your tutor.

### **Exam Gradings for this Summer**

You will have seen that there have been a number of announcements about the process for calculating grades this summer. Mr James and Dr Cusick are writing to all exam candidates and their parents/carers today to confirm arrangements following the recent announcements and there will be further updates as more specific details emerge, such as the process for vocational courses. EPQ candidates should check their emails for guidance from Mr Morris over the next steps with EPQ.

### **Future Plans**

This term would have involved a number of activities including trips and visits to support Year 12 students with their future planning. As these have been postponed, we have been able to subscribe to Unifrog, which is a platform providing support in researching and

planning for your next steps after sixth form, including apprenticeships. We will also be using Unifrog to help support applications. All Year 12 students and those Year 13 students whose plans are undecided will be able to make use of this: details will be provided via email next week.

In the meantime, Make Happen have a number of presentations to help you weigh up the different options after sixth form:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLw6kuw6nmcheNnZ5FLjRCIA3gZM0tSvtp>

## **Email Contacts for Universities**

We received the following message this week from ARU: *We have started contacting our applicants to offer support and answer any questions they may have, given the current circumstances. In doing this we have noticed that a lot of applicants have their school/college email address as their contact email; please could you kindly remind your students to change this to their personal email address (as soon as it is convenient), in order to receive information/welcome from their university before they start their course (and before their school/college email account no longer exists.)*

**All** university applicants should check their email contact details – your BSF email address will no longer work from September 2020, so you should make sure that you have an email address which will allow universities to contact you from then onwards.

## **UCAS and University Applications**

For 2020 applicants who have not yet confirmed their decisions, please be aware of the following message from UCAS:

*The Government has asked universities and colleges across the UK to stop making unconditional offers or amending existing offers until 4 May (1 May in Wales). This is because they're worried you'll feel pressured to accept these offers over others you might be better suited to. Our advice to students who have received an unconditional offer is always to consider whether this is the right provider and course for you before you make any decision. To give you time to make your decisions – and to understand more about how qualifications will be awarded this summer, we've extended our May offer deadline for UCAS Undergraduate applicants. If you're affected by this extension, we'll email you your new decision deadline.*

For 2021 applicants from Year 13 and Year 12, you may be aware that campus events including university open days have been cancelled. To help you explore and start making your decisions about universities and further education, most providers are offering virtual tours. A list of these is here:

<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/what-and-where-study/open-days-and-events/virtual-tours>

Unibuddy, via UCAS, offers the opportunity to chat to students remotely about their experiences of particular universities and courses:

<https://www.ucas.com/chat-to-students>

## **Student Finance**

A reminder to Year 13 students that you need to arrange your student finance for university or college tuition: <https://www.gov.uk/student-finance>

### **Book Return - Year 13**

In due course, we will be asking Year 13 students to return any texts and books that you have borrowed via the library. We will confirm when you will need to return these - £20 from your original enrolment fee will be returned once you have returned the books. In the meantime, please hang on to them!

### **Year 13 Programme of Study**

With external exams cancelled, Year 13 students may well want to use the opportunity to prepare for their planned courses. Many universities are contacting or planning to contact applicants with details of suggested reading and preparation you can be doing during this time, and you may want to reach out to universities from which you hold offers to enquire about this. You also may want to consider completing MOOCs, as will Year 12s exploring university courses. Try FutureLearn, Coursera and iversity. Additionally, all Year 13s have the opportunity to take part in one of Eton College's online courses, in Problem Solving and Creativity. Details have been sent out via Edulink.

With apologies for such a lengthy communication – there is a great deal of information to share in these challenging times! On behalf of all the staff in the sixth form, we hope that you and your families continue to be safe and well and we thank you for all your support at this time.

Yours faithfully

Melanie Townsend