

ARK ACADEMY

YEAR 13 GCE CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

A Mathematics and Citizenship Rich School



SIXTH FORM

2020 - 2021

www.arkacademy.org

MISSION STATEMENT

Ark Academy has at its core the pursuit of highest standards possible in education. We believe in high aspirations, high motivation and high achievement for all. Through our extended curriculum and community life we seek to meet the needs of the whole person. Civitas – Citizenship – is at our core. We will build a community of civic pride and social justice in which all members are equally valued. We are committed to the service of young people and to helping them play their full part in society.

In light of this we aim to:

- *Provide every student with the knowledge, skills, self belief and motivation to be successful in their learning and lives*
- *Welcome, value and respect all who come to the school*
- *Build a community based on justice and a sense of personal responsibility*
- *Provide opportunities for all to experience CIVITAS whilst developing a spirit of tolerance and understanding for all cultures, traditions and faiths*
- *Promote dialogue and co-operation with the wider community*

Our Driving Principles are:

- ***Excellence***
- ***Citizenship***
- ***Participation***
- ***Persistence***

Our goal

Our goal is that all students should be able to access higher education and participate fully in our democratic society.

Introduction

We have reached final year in your second level education – this is the final hurdle to your chosen **university** and eventually – your chosen **career**!

This booklet focuses both on the **year 13 curriculum** and the **upcoming A2 examinations** and has been designed as a ‘go to guide’ for you to reference during the key months ahead.

It includes:

- A comprehensive **timeline of the year**, including dates for key assessments and both sets of mock exams
- Details of any **controlled assessments** to be taken – worth a percentage certain subject grades
- An overview of the **external exam process** including GCE exam entries and number of subjects
- Our plan for **supporting all students** to achieve their best this year through independent study, targeted intervention and revision
- The **provision curriculum: university preparation & UCAS applications**

Should you have any questions about the curriculum and assessment plans for the year please speak to individual teachers or the relevant Head of Department. All details are at the back of this booklet. Alternatively contact one of the senior team who will be more than happy to help:

Miss Iliffe	Director of Sixth Form	e.iliffe@arkacademy.org
Mr Triantafilidis	Senior Tutor: Year 13	n.triantafilidis@arkacademy.org
Miss Rogers	Senior Tutor: Year 12	k.rogers@arkacademy.org

KEY DATES



3 week Review:

Monday 5th – Friday 9th October

Autumn MINI MOCK assessments

W/B Monday 9th November

BTEC MOCK assessments

W/B Monday 23rd November

Parent Tutor Day:

Wednesday 16th December

BTEC EXAMS

W/B Monday 4th Jan

MOCK EXAMS

W/B Monday 22nd Feb

Parent Student Exam Sign off:

Thursday 25th March

A-Level and BTEC EXAMS BEGIN

W/B Monday 17th May

The External Examination Process:

GCE Exams 2020-21

GCE Target Setting & Predictions

We want to ensure that every one of our students is challenged to reach their potential in their A-Level exams and take the process of setting and sharing targets very seriously. Every Ark Academy Sixth Form student will be set **challenging A Level targets** this year based on their **average GCSE score**, their baseline assessment result the subject grades they achieved at GCSE (where applicable) and of course their AS grades. The targets will be based on historic data of the **top 25% attainment** at Key Stage 5 across the country. Students will receive these revised targets for **individual subjects** from their teachers in autumn 1.

In addition to targets and assessment grades, teachers will also submit predicted grades regularly through the year. A **professional prediction** is defined as

‘...a realistic measure of attainment, quantifying the grade you would get in your actual A2 exams if you continue working at the same rate for the rest of the year’

Students will receive their first **professional prediction** in autumn 1 for **UCAS application purposes**. This prediction will also specifically take into context their year 12 result in that subject. At each mock assessment point in the year ahead, these predictions will be revised and shared with students in addition to attainment grades.

Interim and Mock examinations: *Reviewing attainment through the year*

This coming term is a very important one for teachers and heads of department in every subject, who look carefully at each A Level student’s progress, attainment and commitment to the subject. The first **Year 13 Review** will take place early in autumn 1. During this review, teachers will report to senior staff on the effort and attainment of each student so far. This will enable us to intervene effectively to support your son/daughter.

In almost all cases, we will advise students to continue to study three A-Level subjects as this maximises their chances of getting the grades they need in 3 A-Levels and thus offers from the university of their choosing. We will contact parents if we advise otherwise.

The mock exams take place in spring 2 half term, from the **22nd February**. In most cases, students will sit full GCE papers in every subject in an exam hall and their overall result should be indicative of how they will achieve in their real GCE exams in May.

Exam Entries

The results of the mock exams, will determine the **GCE external exam entries** for every student. Each student and their parents will then attend the **Exam Entry evening** at Ark Academy, where both students and their parents will sign off on all GCE entries. More information on the exam entries process and the external exams themselves will be sent out in advance of the evening.

A **draft A2 examination timetable** will be circulated to all students later this term.

Supporting you to achieve your best

In addition to all the hard work taking place in lessons every day, special support will be provided for Year 13 in this crucial year. Staff will be going above and beyond to ensure that every student can fulfil their potential in their A level exams in the summer. These additional levels of support will be available in a variety of ways as detailed below.

Study Periods

Sixth form students have between twelve and eighteen study periods during the weekly timetable.

Having study periods and two exclusive, designated study rooms is a great privilege of being a sixth former at Ark. Our students welcome the opportunity to have two rooms for their exclusive use where they can study without interruption, focussing on reading and homework which needs to be done well and on time. How well students work in this time is the students' responsibility although the time is also monitored by teachers and the study area is supervised during the school day. **It is critical that students use their study time effectively and students not working will lose privileges.**

All year 13s this year have been given the autonomy over how they spend their study periods. They may go off site if they wish or use 609, 308 or the library. They may also use the 2 small offices on the 3rd floor as a "break out" space. Classrooms may also be used on the 3rd floor, if available and for work only.

As with all privileges comes responsibility. All students need to ensure they are using this time effectively and making it to timetabled lessons on time if studying offsite. Those who fail to meet these basic expectations will be placed onto study contract and required to report to a study area (609 or 308, when a supervising teacher is available in 308) for a fixed number of study periods a week, and sign in with the supervising teacher at the start of the period, and stay there.

Saturday & holiday revision sessions

Saturday and holiday revision sessions will be available during the school year, especially in the build up to exams. Teachers will make arrangements for these sessions and keep you informed. Of course, Sixth Form requires independent study so the majority of preparation for exams outside of lesson time must be done independently.

Independent learning

Finally, it is absolutely essential that students are completing independent work (in addition to homework) outside of school. By making this investment of time now it will pay huge dividends in the exams this summer.

Progression beyond Sixth Form

The UCAS application Process

Ark Academy will support your son/daughter to make an 'informed, ambitious choice' about their next steps, whether this is at University or an Apprenticeship.

Critical for applying for university is the UCAS Application. **UCAS stands for Universities and Colleges Admission Service.** UCAS coordinates applications to different universities – a student can apply to up to five universities through UCAS.

Ark Academy provides expert advice on UCAS applications and it is critical that students follow this advice. The Ark Academy Home School Agreement, signed by students, parents and teacher states that students "will accept help, guidance or support, be that academic or pastoral, when offered it and understand that Ark Academy will make decisions in my best interests".

Often people present the UCAS process to be very complicated and difficult: it is not, if your son/daughter is **organised, honest** and, after taking some time to weigh up different options, **decisive**. By December 2019, your son/daughter should have:

- 1) Chosen a preferred degree;
- 2) Chosen five competitive universities where this degree may be studied;
- 3) Completed a UCAS form and written a personal statement explaining why it is the preferred degree.

So, this year, building up knowledge of universities, degrees, and perhaps gaining some degree related work experience is important (essential in Medicine, Pharmacy and Law), but the most important is the end of year 12 grades.

Ark Academy subject teachers and tutors will work together to write an honest and supportive UCAS reference which will be completed in the Autumn of 2018: the sooner your son/daughter chooses their degree and completes the UCAS Application, the sooner this reference can be completed. This reference will state their academic achievements so far and describe evidence of their academic passion for the degree of their choice. Above all, however, it will describe honestly and supportively their learning attitude since starting in Ark Academy Sixth Form: **those students with excellent attendance, punctuality and an Ark Diploma, will benefit from a strong reference.**

Applicants fill in a UCAS form online, and this is then submitted to the relevant universities on the applicant's behalf. All communication with applicants, by universities, goes through UCAS. As a result, applicants need fill in only one form, write one personal statement, and have one supporting school reference.

Applicants can apply to a maximum of **five** courses through UCAS in the first instance, with some specific restrictions. (e.g. an applicant can only apply to Oxford or Cambridge and it is not possible to apply for more than **four** courses in Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Science. The fifth choice is available for an alternative).

An Outline of the Online System

Applicants fill in their UCAS form via the **APPLY** section of the UCAS website: www.ucas.com. The application can be built up online over several sessions, with progress being saved at each stage.

Once an applicant has completed their part of the form, they “submit” the form to their referee, their tutor.

The referee adds the school reference to the form, and checks the content of the pupil’s application. Corrections can be made at this stage. The Assistant Principal (Sixth Form Progression), or other nominated person, makes a final check of the complete form, before it is sent electronically to UCAS. **From this point on, no changes can be made to any part of the UCAS form. Ultimate responsibility for the sixthformer’s part of the form rests with the sixthformer.**

As part of the application process, **an application fee needs to be paid by the applicant.**

Upon receipt of the application, UCAS will allocate an application number and a new password; using these, sixthformers can keep track of the application, through the **TRACK** section of the UCAS website. Sixthformers must ensure that they do not lose this number and password: **the school cannot access them.**

Having received the application, UCAS will send a hard copy of the application to the universities to which have been applied. The information provided to universities will be “blind” – i.e. no admissions tutor will be able to see the other courses for which have been applied. Once the admissions tutor has made his/her decision – normally a decision to make a conditional offer, or reject – they will communicate this to UCAS, and applicants will see this outcome through “Track”. This decision can often be a long time coming – even forms submitted in October may not get a full set of responses until late March (or even April). The decision may only be made after the collection of additional information, for example, via the submission of a portfolio of work, through interview, or through additional written tests.

Applicants then accept or reject the offers they have received through the UCAS website.

Full details about the application system can be found on the UCAS website.

- For applicants: www.ucas.com/students/applying/howtoapply/
- For parents: www.ucas.com/parents/applying/howtoapply/

The UCAS website is full of useful information and instructions on how to complete UCAS Apply.

Personal statements

A personal statement is a 4000 character statement which explains why you are applying for a particular course at university and why you think you will be successfully studying that course.

Why is the personal statement important?

Universities are looking for high levels of motivation, potential and ability from applicants.

Opportunities to prove yourself in these three areas exist in the UCAS application, the Personal Statement, the School Reference, and any interviews and Admissions Tests.

However, the body of the UCAS application only really contains academic achievements to date and most universities do not require you to attend interviews or sit admission tests.

So, in fact, most applications are accepted or rejected on the quality of the School Reference and the Personal Statement. The School Reference is written for you so it is out of your control.

Therefore, the only opportunity you have to convince universities that they should make you an offer is your Personal Statement. For over 99% of the 55,000 or so courses available in UK universities, the personal statement is the only bit of “you” that admission tutors see.

How do I write a personal statement? Extract of advice given to students

Writing an effective Personal Statement is challenging but crucial.

Some Basics...

- You write one personal statement. It must therefore fit for all five courses you have chosen.
- It can be a maximum of 4,000 characters, including spaces.
- There is no formatting: it is simply a stream of text.
- It should tell an Admissions Tutor why you want to study the course for which you have applied.
- It must be evidence-based – i.e. what have you done? You demonstrate your attributes through the use of evidence.
- It must be reflective – i.e. what you have learnt from what you have done? Do not tell me what you have read; tell me what you learnt from it.
- It can include material on extra-curricular achievements and interests (i.e. the Ark Diploma) – but this should never be more than 30% of the statement, and, if you are applying to the most competitive academic universities (e.g. Oxbridge, Imperial, LSE), then it should be about 15%.
- It should be humble. We will be arrogant for you in the reference!
- It will go through many drafts.
- The hardest bit is to come up with a first draft. It's one of those things you've just got to write. Then, once you have a draft, you have got something to work with.

Some Common Errors...

- Statements of “interest” or “passion” that are unsupported by the tone of the personal statement, or the evidence (or lack of evidence) included.
- Applications for joint honours courses where the personal statement does not address all sections of the course. You need to watch out for this if you are, say, applying for Economics and Politics at three universities, and for PPE at the other two – the PPE tutors will want to see reference to Philosophy.
- Spelling and grammatical errors, and nonsensical statements. Read the statement back: does it make sense? Does it flow? Get others to read it for you.

WARNING:

UCAS now run all applications through anti-plagiarism software. This compares all personal statements with: all other UCAS applications submitted that year; all UCAS applications ever submitted before; all software providing UCAS advice available on-line or through bookstores; all other text available on the internet. **If you copy and paste your Personal Statement, it will be picked up.** If this occurs, then your application will be void, and you will not get into university through this application cycle.

Interviews and Further Tests for universities

- Some universities require sixthformers to sit an admissions test and to attend an interview before sixthformers gain admission to particular courses. It is essential that sixthformers check carefully the course they are applying for to see if it has an admissions test or interview. Sixthformers can do this on the UCAS website here - <http://search.ucas.com/>
- UCAS also provide a handy summary of the courses which require admissions tests and interviews which is available here - <https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/entry-requirements/admissions-tests>
- Please note that most admissions tests and interviews take place in the Autumn Term of Year 13 and sixthformers will need to start preparations for them by the Summer Term of Year 12 at the latest.
- Heads of Department and teachers are advised to be aware of any Admissions Tests or Interviews that are used in their subjects and to be prepared to support pupils in their preparation for tests/interviews.
- If sixthformers would like to study Medicine, Veterinary Science or attend Oxford, Cambridge or Imperial College Universities, sixthformers will be expected to complete Admissions Tests and interviews. Other universities also use Admissions Tests for certain subjects or may call sixthformers for interview.

What are my options if I don't go to University this year?

All our students apply to university through UCAS, but we also strongly encourage them to apply for top Apprenticeships as an alternative.

Last year two of our students won places on Degree Apprenticeships in economics and engineering with TfL and Ofcom. These students are guaranteed an £22 000 salary and at the end they will receive a degree. In addition they will not have to pay any tuition fees. This will mean that after three years they will be better off than their peers who have studied the same degree, but without the apprenticeship contract.

Apprenticeships like this are available at many top firms, but are extremely competitive and applications happen outside the UCAS process.

We expect some of our most determined pupils to put in 10-15 applications to these programmes over the course of the year.

Where can I find apprenticeship vacancies?

There are three main places where you can find information about available apprenticeships. In addition, research online, particularly on Twitter, might help you find opportunities with smaller companies.

TAKE NOTE: several of these websites display **live vacancies**. They are updated on a daily basis, so there will be new opportunities available all the time. They may also display roles that start before you have finished school – make sure the check that the start date is after you have finished Year 13.

Government Apprenticeship Search

<https://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch>

This is a **live** database of current vacancies. You can filter by location, sector, and qualification level.

Not Going To Uni

<http://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk/apprenticeships>

<http://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk/sponsored-degrees>

There are several **live** databases, including one for apprenticeships, and one for sponsored degrees.

All About School Leavers

<http://www.allaboutschoolleavers.co.uk/>

This is a **live** database of current vacancies. You can filter by location, sector, and qualification level.

Rate My Apprenticeship

<https://www.ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk/>

This website has both a **live** database and a list of the top employers who currently offer apprenticeships/ school leaver programmes. This means that you can check for the latest vacancies, but also see which employers have applications opening later in the year.

What is the application timeline?

This depends on the size of the company, the number of vacancies, and the type of programme you are applying for. Broadly speaking, it splits into four groups.

1. Early application: 'school leaver' programmes

These opportunities are often (but not always!) called school leaver programmes. Their application process takes place before Christmas, so if you are applying with them then you need to be organised.

2. Ongoing application: school leaver and apprenticeships

Some companies use an 'ongoing application' process. Their application windows usually open early (around September) but as soon as they have filled their vacancies then they will close. You need to get your application in as quickly as possible in order to have the best chance of getting in.

3. Easter application: most apprenticeships

Most companies open applications at some point between January and March, and close applications around the Easter holidays.

4. Summer application: some apprenticeships

Some companies do not start recruitment until you have left school. They won't open applications until May/June/July, but the application window will be shorter. This means that even if you don't secure an apprenticeship in the first rounds of application, you will still have options to apply when you finish school.

What is the application process?

Again, this varies for every company. There will likely be several phases to the application process which could include:

Basic Application Form

Some application forms are pretty straightforward. They'll ask for details about your qualifications, work history and any special requirements you might have. They'll also cover formalities about your right to work in the UK and any criminal convictions you might have.

Extended Application Form

With these application forms, demonstrating your skills and how they relate to the apprenticeship should be at the forefront of your mind. You should also think about the skills and qualities they are looking for and how you match up to them.

CV and Cover Letter

Some employers like to keep it old school, asking candidates to send in an apprenticeship CV and cover letter. If you're emailing them, make sure your cover letter is in the body of the email and your CV is attached. Make sure your CV and cover letter are tailored to the company and the specific apprenticeship you are applying for.

Functional Skills Tests

Some companies will want to test your skills in Maths and English. They might do this online, or ask you to come in and complete a test that is similar to a short exam paper.

Extended Online Tests

Other companies will ask you to complete longer online tests, including e-tray activities and critical reasoning. Try to find some examples on the internet before you attempt the real thing.

Telephone/Skype Interview

Rather than invite you into the office straight away, many companies will want to speak to you on the phone/Skype first. It is important to treat this stage in the same way as a face-to-face interview.

Face-to-Face Interview

This might form one part of an assessment day, and will involve being interviewed by one or two people. Companies will provide guidance on what sort of questions they might ask you. If it is a 'strengths-based' interview then make sure you have prepared for this.

Group Activity

Your interviewers may wish to see how you interact in a group, as this also allows them to assess your communication and teamwork skills.

Assessment Day

Sometimes companies will invite you to spend a day in their office, where you will complete several parts of the application process in one go. You might do online tests, interviews, or group tasks. Remember that even when you are not participating in an activity, you are still being assessed!

What else will I need?

National Insurance Number: you will often be asked for this at some point during the application process, so it is worth applying for one as soon as possible.

Subject Contacts

The easiest and quickest way to contact your son/daughters teacher is via email. Staff emails all follow the same format: the first letter of their first name followed by a full stop followed by their surname then @arkacademy.org.

For example If you wish to contact Tracey Keane her email is t.keane@arkacademy.org

Subject	Code	Teacher Name
Art & Photography	DPA	Paton, Daniel
Biology	LSA	Sach, Laura
	AWA	Wanklyn, Alastair
	SMC	McGrath, Shannon
Business Studies	JKH	Khalayleh, Joseph
	ARI	Rais, Aoutmen
	FAS	Aslam, Farah
	HBA	Balal, Hassan
Chemistry	MSA	Salad, Maryan
	NSH	Shah, Nabil
	TKE	Keane, Tracey
Core Maths	SBN	Burney, Saba
Economics	CRU	Russell, Charlotte
	EIL	Illiffe, Emily
English Literature	ICL	Clark, Isabel
	MBC	Burcham, Michael
	ABY	Boyd, Alison
	AHA	Hanna, Amy
	FMA	Mannerings, Finnbar
Further Maths	NTR	Triantafilidis, Nicolas
	EIL	Illiffe, Emily
	OSK	Skehel, Oscar
French	SST	Stewart, Sandra
	CNE	Neill, Chris
Geography	LTA	Tamburello, Lucia
	RSA	Shah, Riya
	TCH	Cheetham, Tom
Government and Politics	PNU	Nugent, Paul
	MHI	Hill, Michael
History	AKI	Kinnon, Alice
	TSA	Sawbridge, Tom
	FPI	Pitkin, Fiona
	DAL	Araliya, Dilhara
Maths	CRU	Russell, Charlotte

	EOZ	Ozeke, Emi
	KBT	Butler, Katie
	OSK	Skehel, Oscar
	JBO	Bowley, Janette
	NTR	Triantafilidis, Nicolas
	EIL	Iliffe, Emily
	HRE	Rees, Hilary
PE	SOC	O'Carroll, Stephen
	KGA	Gallagher, Kelly
Physics	ADI	Dineen, Adam
PSHE	MBC	Burcham, Michael
	MSA	Salad, Maryan
	HBA	Balal, Hassan
	JJO	Joseph-Bristol, Jamilla
	ADI	Dineen, Adam
	OSK	Skehel, Oscar
	JKH	Khalayleh, Joseph
	DPA	Paton, Daniel
	AWA	Wanklyn, Alastair
	RMO	Moore, Ryan
	LSA	Sach, Laura
	FPI	Pitkin, Fiona
Psychology	JJO	Joseph-Bristol, Jamila
	KRG	Rogers, Kimberley
	ALE	Lisle, Angela
Religious Studies	JMC	Macivor, Jess
	HMA	Maundrell, Heather
	FDY	Daya, Fatima
Science	SMC	McGrath, Shannon
	ADI	Dineen, Adam
	RMO	Moore, Ryan
	EPI	Pierce, Eoghan
	TKE	Keane, Tracey
Sociology	ALE	Lisle, Angela
	JJO	Joseph-Bristol, Jamila
	KRG	Rogers, Kimberley
Spanish	JFI	Figueroa, Julieta
	CKE	Kelly, Caroline