



Tring School

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Mortimer Hill Tring Herts HP23 5JD



1 October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

RE: TRIPLE SCIENCE GCSE STUDENT OPTIONS

Your child started their GCSE studies in May 2020. Over the last few years, GCSEs have changed. Science began their new curriculum and specification in 2016 and it was examined for the first time in the summer of 2018. In preparing our students we have a limited amount of historic data and, as such, we have been in discussions with the exam board, other schools and studied our own results data in order to make the most informed decisions. Over the past two years, nationally, only a small percentage of students studied the separate Science subjects. These students were selected based on their academic ability and, as it showed in the past two years of exams, the grade boundaries for the separate Sciences were inflated. This made it harder than previous years for some students to achieve the highest grades. Although still achievable, the new Triple Science course is far more demanding than the old course; students are required to work at a faster pace and are reliant on more independent learning strategies.

We believe that it is far more beneficial for some of our students to achieve two higher grades rather than three average grades. In previous years, we have made the decision that some of our students would be better placed studying for the Double (two GCSE) qualification and we will be undertaking the same process this year. We still have high aspirations for our students and seek to enter a good percentage of students onto the Separate Science course.

In order to facilitate this and, coupled with our desire for all students to achieve the grades that they are capable of in Science, we will be using the results from their Autumn term assessment which will take place on Monday 12 October 2020 (for the X half of the year) and on Tuesday 13 October 2020 (for the Y half of the year) during their Science lesson. The highest achieving students in this assessment will be eligible to study the Separate Science course using one of their option subjects; this will be a choice they make during the option process. Those students who are below the threshold will be entered for the Combined Science GCSE (Double Science Award) and obtain two Science grades.

We aspire for all of our students to achieve their greatest potential, however, we have to be realistic and ensure that it is an achievable task. The information to date indicates that the grade boundaries are significantly higher from Grade 4 to 6, making it harder to achieve these grades in the Separate Sciences compared to the Combined Science and our GCSE results from the past few summers reflect that we made the right decision for our students

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last year. The national average for Combined Science students who last sat official GCSE exams was 56%, grades 9-4, our students achieved 79%, grades 9-4. The national average for the Separate Sciences was 91%, grades 9-4 this summer and Tring School Separate Science results were 100%, grades 9-4.

To clarify, the Combined Science GCSE (double award) will enable them to study any of the Sciences at 'A' level and will not affect any future application to UCAS; including Medicine and Veterinary Science.

The Autumn test will be on two topics; 'The Earth and Atmosphere' which the students studied in the last term of Year 8 and the 'Genetics and Evolution' topic which all Year 9 will have completed, been assessed on and had in-class feedback. All students will have a sequence of four revision lessons to recap the content of these topics before the test and revision resources will be placed onto Go4Schools as well as their Science google classroom.

If you have any queries regarding any of the above, please email Katie Ross - kross@tringschool.org.

Yours faithfully

Jo Pennington-Wright
Subject Leader for Science.

Katie Ross
Assistant Subject Leader for Science, KS3