



HILTON COLLEGE

A letter from

The Head

No. 19-8 / 31 May 2019

Dear Parents,

Many thanks for the various responses to my previous newsletter on Winning; it certainly struck a chord with many and elicited much discussion in various circles - exactly what I had hoped it would do.

This year's term dates have been less than ideal as we have had to find a compromise with the state-school calendar to enable all schools to have sufficient weekends for our sports programme. This has resulted in a change to some of our routines to which we have become accustomed. Alongside this change is the decision to shift our 'mid-year' exams for Grades 8-11 into the third term; this is deliberate for the following reasons: the second term has a life of its own with a definite focus that the traditional winter sports programme brings, by moving the exams into the third term we hope to ensure that our boys place equal focus on their academic endeavours. This is not to downplay the football season, as we are aiming to play football as eagerly as we play rugby and hockey, but there is a definite different intensity to the third term.

The result of this decision is that boys will write their 'mid-year exams' in August and we will report on these results at half-term of the third term. This report will have a strong academic focus. We will not report again on academics until the end of the year. The exception to this is our Matrics who write a short, sharp block of exams in June before their Prelims which take place in September. These are designed to ensure our Matrics can gauge as to how they are fairing in their run-up to their Prelims and their Finals.

I am aware that this departure may elicit some anxiety among parents but I am of the opinion that this shift will enhance the exam procedure and preparation for all our boys, with the hope that results will be more reflective of each boy's capability and, resultantly better.

All boys have been writing regular cycle tests this term where we used to skip this practice in the second term. This was designed to ensure their ongoing focus.

Our goal is to prepare your sons for life - this includes writing exams at various stages in their academic careers. We do not rely only on exam results to gauge progress in learning as academic and cognitive development are far more nuanced than what a measurement attained by sitting an exam can produce, however, we recognise that this skill remains important and necessary in arriving at success.



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Please will you support your son in ensuring that he gives of his best at all times, but especially during the exam session in August. Focussed work and practise of past exams are essential ingredients in this aspect of learning.

We begin these exams on 24 July, the week after your sons come back from the July holiday, for Grades 8-11 and the Grade 12 Trial Examinations will begin on 20 August, straight after half term break in the 3rd term.

Regards,

George