



# Information Handbook for Parents & Guardians

Academic Year  
2010-11

## Introduction

Our aim at Wyke is for all students to achieve their potential. We encourage students to work hard throughout their courses; we set targets for achievement and teachers and tutors will review progress and keep parents informed. Below we give some information about these activities and processes. More detail is given in the Student handbook which is available to view using this link [StudentHandbook2010-11.pdf](#).

We believe the role of parents is of the utmost importance, and we will inform you of your son/daughter's progress. If there are problems, we will contact you concerning specific difficulties. Your support is valued by the college and we welcome any views you may have about your son/daughter's education at Wyke.

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## 1) Progress Assessments & Reviews

At five chosen points during their courses (and in particular at the end of the Autumn and Spring Terms) we clarify with our students what they have achieved and what they should expect to achieve. We help them to set realistic staging posts in the form of target grades, too. They will bring the results of these reviews home to discuss with you and we also invite you to consult with teachers on the progress being made. This term we intend to review how we communicate with you about your son's or daughter's progress so if you have any views – particularly about ways we can use new communication facilities now common in most households – please send a message through any of the means listed above.

## 2) Key events timeline

Date	Key events: including Progress Assessments & Reviews
September/ October 2010	<u>Progress Assessment 1</u> College Departments meet to discuss student progress and to also to determine whether the student would benefit from additional learning support. Any particular problems are discussed with students and their (Personal) Tutors. Parents are contacted if appropriate.
November	<u>Progress Assessment 2</u> Students have one to one discussions with teachers about progress. For students on an advanced course, GCSE grades achieved in school are used to provide a 'minimum target grade' for each subject. Students use the discussions to plan their next steps for improvement. Parents will receive a copy of the Progress Assessment information that is used in the subject discussions. Students will be discussing their overall progress at College with their (personal) Tutor.
2 & 7 December	Consultation Evenings. These are an opportunity to discuss the Student Review with your daughter/son's tutor and teachers. They are often arranged by invitation so that we can meet with, and support, students with the greatest needs .We encourage students to be present for these meetings.
January 2011	<u>Progress Assessment 3</u> College Departments meet to discuss student progress and to also to determine whether the student would benefit from additional learning support. Any particular problems are discussed with students and their (Personal) Tutors. Parents are contacted if appropriate. Many students will also have modular examinations

March 2011	<p><u>Progress Assessment 4</u></p> <p>Subject teams meet to assess student progress. In some cases the results of the external examinations taken in January will become available and these too feed into the Progress Assessment process.</p> <p>Both subject and (personal) tutors discuss progress with students who then note targets and actions for improvement,</p>
March	<p>Students on single year courses are interviewed about their aims for the following year. Students on Advanced courses indicate their preferred programme for their second year. This will be confirmed or revised in August after the results have been issued.</p>
7 & 12 April	<p>Consultation Evenings. Again we welcome your presence at one of these to talk through any points that may help your son/daughter be successful. As with the Autumn Progress assessments, meetings are often arranged by invitation so that we can meet with, and support, students with the greatest needs.</p> <p>Students should have a revision timetable for exams or a plan for completing assignments in good time for the summer examinations.</p>
May	<p><u>Progress Assessment 5</u></p> <p>College Departments meet to discuss student progress and to also to determine whether the student would benefit from additional learning support. Any particular problems are discussed with students and their (Personal) Tutors. Parents are contacted if appropriate.</p>
May/June	<p>Examination season.</p>

<b>During the second year of an advanced programme, in addition to the above:</b>	
September/ October 2011	<p>Many students will be applying to University at this time and Tutors will be checking the final copy of their UCAS application or looking at progress on job search, CV and personal statements. The internal deadline for UCAS applications is mid October.</p> <p>Oxbridge applications must be submitted by the end of the first week in October.</p>
March 2012	<p>Students should have a revision timetable for exams or a plan for completing assignments in good time for the summer examinations.</p>

### 3) Grades Used in Reviews

#### How we work out the Target Grade (level three students)

It is important that a target means something real to a student; otherwise it is simply something that we expect of them rather than it being a genuine target to which they aspire. We use two approaches in setting target grades: both of these use national databases which link final advanced level performance, to prior achievement at GCSE level. We set students a **minimum target grade**, but we also set targets we believe expect them to set for themselves (with our guidance) their own target grade. This may well be (and should be) a more demanding grade. The grades used in the Review process are outlined below, (note the wording is directed at students as this section comes directly from their handbook):

MTG	<i>The minimum target grade (this is for level 3 courses) is the minimum grade you should be working towards. It is a challenging minimum. It is based on a national analysis of students who have a similar set of GCSE (and BTEC) results to yours and who have set their sights high and worked hard to exceed this minimum. Grades used – A-E or P, M, D (Pass, Merit, and Distinction) for some vocational courses.</i>
CAG	<i>The current assessment grade is the grade which, in the judgement of your teacher, will be obtained if you continue to work at the level that you are currently. It is a prediction: if you keep on working as now, and have been recently, you will probably get this grade.</i>
Avg GCSE	<i>Average GCSE points achieved by the student prior to starting course (A*=8 to G=1) BTEC First Diploma – Pass = CCCC, Merit = BBBB, Distinction = AAAA.</i>
TG	<i>The target grade is the grade that we use for each review during the year. It is set by your teacher or by you. The bottom line is the minimum target grade. From there you should raise your aim as you progress.</i>

#### **4 Deadlines and Time Management**

##### **'Failing to plan is planning to fail'**

Many of us need prompts if we are to keep on top of our work. And students are the same. One of the ways parents can help is to take an interest in their daughter/son's course and progress. It is very important that students organise themselves to complete work to given deadlines.

There will be some 'pressure points' during a student's time at Wyke, perhaps when deadlines coincide or as examinations loom. It is important that students prepare for these through sensible planning and spread their workload to avoid leaving too much work to the last minute. Please note, if your son/daughter feels under pressure with too many deadlines at the same time, it is important that they talk to the subject teacher and personal tutor.

#### **5 The Importance of Being There.**

Students do need full attendance at College if they are to fulfil their potential. And, as many courses include coursework (up to 100% in some programmes) and almost all subjects include examination work, we think it vital that students have the maximum time with teaching staff. Any disruption to attendance should be kept to a minimum, (students should not take holidays in term time). We do not give study leave during the January exam period, and in the summer we continue lessons until as late as possible; right up to the examination for some subjects. We find this gives us the opportunity to give students assistance with revision.

**Advanced level students must return to college at the end of first year exams.** During the final few weeks of the summer term teachers will be preparing for the second year. In addition our Higher Education preparation programme will be providing students with essential information to help with UCAS applications.

**It is important therefore that students do not arrange to go on holiday until after Wednesday 13 July 2011**

### PLEASE NOTE

If you have any concerns about your son/daughter's progress at college you can make an appointment with their Personal Tutor at any time. If you are dissatisfied in any way with the college please contact the Principal, Dr Richard Smith

For further information contact:

Your son/daughter's Personal Tutor (you should have their email address)

Debbie Darmody - Student Guidance Manager

Your son/daughter's Division Head

Ian Taylor - Vice Principal

During the course of your son/daughter's stay at Wyke, we would expect to keep you informed by way of the following means of communication:

- Principal's letter at the start of the year
- College newsletters – produced each term
- Invitation to Consultation Evenings – twice a year
- Information relating to Aimhigher and HE/Careers events as required
- Individual letters of concern regarding progress assessments, subject review or attendance
- Copies of letters sent to students regarding changes to timetables, appointments with tutors
- Corporation parent nominations and voting
- Meeting for parents of new students
- Details of trips/visits