

Introduction

This booklet is designed to help you understand some of the differences between Sixth Form life and what you have been used to in Years 7 to 11.

It has been written by combining the years of experience of the Sixth Form staff and the questions most often asked by students moving from Year 11 into Year 12.

Of course, if you have any further questions, do not hesitate to ask either the Head of Sixth Form or any of the sixth form tutors.

Miss Connolly, Miss Stirzaker and Ms. Forsyth will also be able to answer questions for you. There is more detailed guidance later in the booklet on who to see for specific issues.

To make your time in Latifa School for Girls Sixth Form rewarding and enjoyable, please read carefully all the information and advice given here.

June 2009



Sixth Form Life at Latifa School

How enjoyable Sixth Form life is for you and others is, in many ways, up to you - you will get out of the year (or two years) only what you are prepared to put into it.

The Sixth Form at Latifa School for Girls is a small and friendly one with usually only about thirty to forty students studying a wide range of subjects in small, very well-resourced classes. Some subjects are exclusive to Years 12 and 13, so you will not have come across them before. Whatever you have applied to study, your timetable will have been planned and considered very carefully according to your needs and abilities, and to meet the requirements of High School Graduation.

If you use your time appropriately, your timetable will keep you very busy, but it is also important for you to involve yourself in the wider life of the School. As the most senior students you will be setting an example to younger girls in your behaviour around school, your attitude to your studies and in your willingness to get involved, and often take the lead, in whole-school activities. Also you can initiate special events of your own such as the National Day celebrations and fund-raising for charity.

There will be occasions when you will be representing Latifa School to others; either with visitors to the School or people you meet on trips or work placements outside school.

As a member of the Sixth Form, you are given certain privileges. These privileges have been negotiated over the years by previous Sixth Formers but, as they are privileges and not rights, these will be reviewed from year to year - especially if they are abused in any way. As with all privileges they come with responsibilities.

Here are some of these privileges:

- ❖ A more flexible uniform, including trousers (see later);
- ❖ More relaxed jewellery and make-up rules;
- ❖ Special Sixth Form study rooms and a common room with kitchen facilities;
- ❖ Access to IT facilities and the Careers Room;
- ❖ You may bring your personal laptop into school - at your own risk and subject to you bringing in signed permission ;

However:

You may not bring in a mobile phone or camera without informing your Head of Year in advance. If you have been given permission by the Head of Year then the phone or camera should be brought to the Head of Year's office first thing in the morning. This privilege is extended on the understanding the Sixth Form will respect this rule. If students are found to have a mobile or a camera without permission, this privilege may be stopped.

- ❖ **The Sixth Form Council.** This is made up of students who represent their fellow students in meetings with the Head of Year and others.
- ❖ **Gate passes.** Another rule that is slightly different in the Sixth Form is that you are allowed to go outside the school gates at the end of the day without a maid, parent or older sister - **but you must have a gate pass** to be allowed to do this, which you can get from Miss Forsyth on production of a signed letter from home. This is for your safety.

Here are some of your responsibilities:

- ❖ To come to school on time and prepared for work;
- ❖ To arrive punctually to each lesson and prepared for work;
- ❖ To use your study time responsibly and respect other students right to work quietly within the study areas;
- ❖ To set a good example to students in other Year groups;
- ❖ Take responsibility for your work and your actions;
- ❖ Make the best possible effort at all times
- ❖

Most of these are responsibilities which you have agreed to when you sign the Latifa Learning Agreement.

However, at the beginning of the year you will work with your Form tutors and fellow students to create a 6th Form Learning Agreement which establishes a code of conduct respecting others. On the next page you will find the Learning Agreement established by the students and Year team in the academic year 2008-2009.



6th Form Learning Agreement

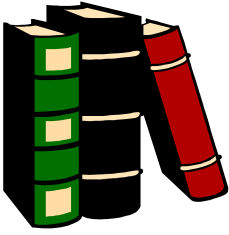
- I will attend all timetabled lessons
- I will take responsibility for being on time for all timetabled lessons
- I will help other students to get to lessons on time
- I will endeavour to be well organised at all times and make sure I have the right materials for my lessons.
- If I have two lessons in a row in the Main Block I will not return to the Common Room for books etcetera
- If I need to collect a book from the Common Room I will make sure I do so as quickly as possible, so I am not late for my lesson
- I will respect the rights of other students to work undisturbed in study periods
- If I am in a study period and the fire bell rings I will leave what I am doing, collect my shayla and go immediately to the meeting point, as I would if I were in a subject lesson
- I agree that I will not use my laptop to show videos in study periods
- It is my responsibility to make sure the Common Room is kept clean and tidy and I will respect the school environment and property
- I will take responsibility for clearing up after myself when I have had food or made a drink in the Common Room
- I will not ask for food to be brought in during the school day
- If there is a special occasion I will ask for permission from my Head of Year for any item to be brought in
- As a member of the 6th Form I will support other students so problems do not arise

I agree to the conditions in this Learning agreement

Form tutor's signature

Student's signature

Head of Year's signature



How Do I Study in Years 12/13?

As indicated in the previous section you are expected to have a mature approach to your chosen studies in Year 12. We expect you to take responsibility for your own learning; your success at this level is in your own hands and is a direct result of how much you are willing to put into your studies. Of course, your tutors and subject teachers will be very supportive and will monitor your progress closely.

The behaviour policy and detention systems apply to the Sixth Form just as lower down the School. However, it is very rare for sixth formers to end up in detention, for work related issues, and it is your responsibility to ensure it stays that way!

Homework will depend on the number of subjects you are studying and the level of the qualification. As a very approximate guide, expect to get about:

- ❖ four hours per subject per week for AS courses and
- ❖ three hours per subject per week for GCSE courses.

The nature of the assignment and how easy or difficult you find the work will also affect the amount of time you spend on homework.



Managing Your Time

Remember, Years 12 and 13 are very short academic years, and you need to manage your time very carefully. You will be given guidance on this by your tutors in early PSE sessions and by your subject teachers.

It is very important that you monitor the amount of time you spend on your subjects and spread your workload sensibly. Be prepared for certain times of year to be more demanding than others - ask your teachers at the beginning of a course when your coursework deadlines are likely to occur and when certain major projects, such as Key Skills, will be demanding your time. You will be given a coursework grid to complete at the beginning of the year and it is your responsibility to speak with your subject teachers and complete the grid. This way you can plan ahead effectively to ensure all your subjects get the attention they require.

External examinations do not only happen at the end of the year - tests, such as the TOEFL and SAT, can be much earlier than this (but only when we feel you are ready for them) and some AS courses have modules in January.

If you are studying AS level subjects, you will also need to build in-time for reviewing work and conducting independent research as well as completing your set homework. In your study diary you can record and monitor your progress in essential Sixth Form study skills and habits. You will be given guidance in these skills in PSE sessions by your form tutor and by your individual subject teachers - see the list below for some of the most important study habits for Sixth form success:

- Use your study periods effectively (see next page);
- Try to complete work as it is set; do not wait until the last minute;
- Allow planning time; do not underestimate how much time a task will take;
- If you feel your workload is too great, discuss its management with your subject teachers and/or form teacher;
- Spread out your work over a period of time; this will allow thinking time to develop your ideas and you are unlikely to produce your best work by staying up all night;
- Make sure you leave time to check your work and make the necessary alterations;
- Highlight deadlines on your calendar and create your own interim deadlines;
- Aim to balance your work commitments with time for family, friends and other interests.



PLAN - DO - REVIEW

What are 'Study Periods'?

You may have heard of these and may even have heard them being referred to as 'frees' - don't you believe it! Study periods are times built into your school day during which you are not in lessons. How many you have, or if you have any at all, will depend on your individual timetable and the kinds of courses you are on.

Unfortunately, this is one of the areas where students have the most difficulties. At the beginning of the academic year, when there are more than five students on study period, the sessions will be supervised by a member of staff. Where five or fewer students have a study period, they will either be working in the study room (Room 56) a computer room, the library or the Careers Room. This system has been created, not as a punishment, but to establish sensible study patterns at the beginning of the year. It is hoped, that as students develop independent study habits, study periods will not have to be supervised.

Study periods are times for you to develop some of the advanced study skills and habits mentioned above in 'Managing Your Time'; they are not for homework as such but for you to use the school facilities at your disposal such as the library and Careers Room and to consolidate your work in some of the following ways:

- ❖ Reviewing previous work
- ❖ Consolidating notes taken in class
- ❖ Attempting past questions
- ❖ Background research
- ❖ Additional reading
- ❖ Individual contact time with teachers
- ❖ Summarising, condensing, revising work



High School Diploma

You may be wondering why so much emphasis is being placed on studying and using your time sensibly. Of course we hope you have some fun and take part in a variety of social activities but, ultimately your aim will be to achieve your High School Diploma as obtaining this document will give you a far wider range of options for your further education and career choices. Despite what you may think (or perhaps have been told) students do not automatically receive their High School Diploma, simply for completing Year 12. We often have students returning to school saying they wish they had realised how important achieving the HSD is.

You were given information about this in the Options Booklet you received in Years 9 and 11 but we feel this information is so important it cannot be repeated too many times.

SO...



What is Ministerial Equivalence about? (Thanawia Aamma)

If you intend studying or working in Dubai then you need to think carefully about this. Latifa School is not a government school; therefore, our students have to prove to the Ministry of Education they have gained equivalence with students who have followed the government system of education. Although local colleges and universities may accept students at the end of Year 12 without a High School Diploma you may find, even if you finish your degree, you will not be able to graduate unless you have achieved equivalency by obtaining the High School Diploma. Another consideration may be, if you choose to work in a government department and have not achieved equivalency you will be placed on a lower pay scale.

The requirements for Ministerial Equivalence and university entrance can vary from year to year; therefore we set a high standard to ensure our students are able to achieve equivalency. The table opposite shows our requirements.



	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Attendance	85%	90%	95%
Punctuality	85%	90%	95%
Arabic	50%	70%	80%
Islamic Studies	50%	70%	80%
TOEFL (iBT)	61	72	83
SAT 1 Reasoning Test (Maths section only)	400	440	480
Grade Point Average*	1.0	2.5	3.5
You must have achieved five passes at GCSE at Grade C or above AND Two AS levels (excluding Arabic and P.E.) at Grade D or above (for the Advanced High School Diploma) OR Satisfactorily completed a project and work experience or community service (for the High School Diploma)			
Personal and social	Generally cooperative and supportive	Supports school activities, acts as a positive role model for younger students and gives time to help others.	

*An aggregate score based on grades received in all subjects

The grades you receive in Year 12 on your Progress Reports count towards your High School Diploma. They are used to calculate your Grade Point Average. Your attendance and punctuality, as well as your general attitude and behaviour around school, are also taken into account.

If you fail to achieve the standard set by the Ministry for equivalency you will be awarded a Latifa School Graduation Certificate but this is simply a transcript of the courses you have studied from Year 9 onwards. It will not give you equivalency and will not allow you to graduate from college or university, or be accepted for a scholarship and receive college fees.

You need to focus and work hard in Year 12 so as to achieve your ambitions!



Who can I go to for help?

There is a whole team of people who can give you help in the Sixth Form and who are committed to ensuring your time is spent productively and happily.

It is essential to your success that you speak to your teachers and form tutor if you have any difficulties - and quickly. Do not let a situation get out of control by ignoring it or letting it go on too long; this just makes it worse. The Sixth Form team has created small Form groups so that each student has a Form tutor who will act as their mentor; in most circumstances, your Form tutor will be the first person to speak to, on pastoral issues. However, there may be times when you require further assistance.

See below for a general guide on who to see for whatever kind of difficulty, but whatever your problem is your Sixth Form team has a lot of experience and can always point you in the right direction.

Ms Broxton **Head of Sixth Form** and in charge of all pastoral matters in Years 12 and 13.

The Head of Year's office is situated in the Sixth Form corridor and you can see her anytime. If in doubt about *anything*, she can either help you directly or advise you as to the best person to go to with any problem you may have.

Ms. Forsyth **Deputy Headmistress** - and in charge of timetabling - any clashes or other problems with the timetable should go to her.

Miss Stirzaker **Senior Teacher**, in charge of all curriculum (subject) matters in Years 12 and 13, including specialist Sixth Form courses such as TOEFL, SAT and Key Skills.

Miss Connoly **Head of Careers** and available to give expert advice about any aspect of careers, job placements, local courses, university and college courses overseas and application procedures.

Form Tutors As noted above your **Form Tutor** is available to give you advice and help on a daily basis. If you are having any difficulties or problems with a subject or a pastoral or social issue, you will find that your tutor is an impartial and discreet listener.

Subject Teachers If you have a problem with work which cannot be dealt with in the lesson, make an appointment with your **subject teacher** at lunchtime or during a study period. Your teachers will always be happy to see you and can, among other things, help you with advice on how to best use your study time for success in their particular subject.

Matron As in Years 7-11, Matron is the person to see if you have any medical concerns. If you fall ill during the day, you should always speak to your next teacher before going to Matron as a matter of courtesy and collect a signed form giving you permission. If you fall ill in an unsupervised study lesson then you should let your Head of Year know.

However, it is especially important in the Sixth Form that you **avoid making medical or dental appointments during school time**. Many students have found that frequent appointments in school time threaten their attendance and punctuality record for High School Diploma.

If you have a very good reason for leaving school during the day and you know of the absence in advance, you must bring a note or appointment card from home and give it to the Head of Sixth Form so that she can issue you with a slip confirming you are allowed to leave school premises. This is for your safety.

If you are late to school for any reason you must sign in just as you do now. If you do not we do not know you are in school and the school secretary will call home. **You must keep in mind you are walking a greater distance in the morning to get up to the Sixth form area - you need to allow for this in morning as if you miss your registration you have to go all the way back down to reception again to sign the book!**

Punctuality to school is a key component of the High School Diploma and frequent lateness may result in you failing this component.



What should I wear in the Sixth Form?

The Sixth Form dress code is more flexible than in Years 7-11, but it is **still a uniform** and we give very clear guidelines. The uniform is appropriate for activities in school and the cultural environment.

Sixth Form Uniform

- ❖ A white school issue 6th form blouse (long over trousers; shorter over skirt)
- ❖ A black **school issue** 6th form skirt or trousers
- ❖ Plain navy, black or grey jacket, jumper, cardigan or sweatshirt or the school sweatshirt (navy coloured); with no writing, pictures or logos

In the Sixth Form you are allowed to wear:

- ❖ Discreet makeup
- ❖ Natural or light coloured nail varnish
- ❖ Discreet jewellery

You are **not** allowed to wear:

- ❖ Jeans, slim-fit trousers or track suit bottoms (except for P.E. lessons)
- ❖ Trainers (except for P.E. lessons)
- ❖ Casual t-shirts
- ❖ T-shirts, tops or jumpers with motifs or cartoons
- ❖ Clothes more appropriate for evening wear
- ❖ Footwear which is unsafe or impractical for school activities
- ❖ Clothes which may give offence to other staff or students

Please ask the Head of Sixth Form if you are unclear about any aspect of the Sixth Form uniform.