



OUR REF :

TRN : 10415399800003

Wednesday, 15th April 2026

**To: Parents of Students in Years 11 and 13 –
CANCELLATION OF PEARSON EDEXCEL EXAMINATIONS IN
UAE - LATEST UPDATE**

Dear Parents,

Greetings from St. Mary's. Greetings from St. Mary's. Firstly, we would like to extend our sincere gratitude for your patience and support regarding the impact of the current situation on the students' examinations. We also understand that like us, you too are completely focused on your child's safety as a top priority, and we are certain that these decisions are solely made keeping their safety as the singular focal point.

Our awarding examination board, Pearson Edexcel have announced that all examinations scheduled for Summer 2026 will not take place in-person in the UAE.

At this time, we want to reassure you that school leaders are well experienced in dealing with emerging situations of this kind and we have well-established policies and procedures in place to ensure that we can provide the necessary evidence that may be required by the awarding examination board.

PEARSON EDEXCEL IGCSE EXAMINATIONS -Applicable to Year 11 students

At SMCHS, we offer the current suite of Pearson Edexcel IGCSE subjects: Arabic A, Accounting, Computer Science, Economics, ICT, History and Religious Studies.

The centre (our school) has been asked to submit a portfolio of assessment evidence for each student for each paper. This evidence **MUST** cover the breadth of the content for that component.

This portfolio of evidence will be graded by a Pearson Examiner.

PEARSON EDEXCEL GCSE EXAMINATIONS -Applicable to Year 11 students

At SMCHS, we offer the current suite of Pearson Edexcel GCSE subjects: Biology, Business, Chemistry, English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Physics, Psychology.

Ofqual has confirmed that regulated qualifications must be based on reliable evidence to secure their comparability with qualifications taken in England and around the world. This means that awarding bodies cannot accept alternative forms of evidence, such as teacher judgement or mock exams.

Pearson Edexcel is committed to ensuring that students have a route to certification. Therefore, for regulated qualifications (in this case GCSE suite of subjects), a student who already has a summer 2026 exam entry will be provided an exceptional route to certification through a Pearson **INTERNATIONAL GCSE** equivalent for this summer series.

The centre (our school) has been asked to submit a portfolio of assessment evidence for each student for each paper. This evidence **MUST** cover the breadth of the content for that component.

This portfolio of evidence will be graded by a Pearson Examiner.

This route is entirely optional for students, and they can of course choose to withdraw from the current series and defer to the June 2027 series.

ONLY THOSE STUDENTS WHO WISH TO WITHDRAW FROM THE CURRENT JUNE 2026 SERIES, MUST send an email (STRICTLY FROM THE PARENT via the PARENT EMAIL ID) to Ms. Vichitra Gabriella on:

vichitra.gabriella-smchs@smgeducation.org to confirm your child's withdrawal from the June 2026 series no later than 18th April 2026.

Parents of those students who wish to certificate this year itself through the Pearson International GCSE certification route, need not send in an email.

For qualifications that include NEA which in our case is the GCSE Art and Design qualification, completed assessments will be used in calculating an overall grade.

Important information about International qualifications and progression

International GCSEs are not regulated by Ofqual. Certificates awarded will clearly show that the qualification is an International one and will not display the Ofqual logo.

PEARSON EDEXCEL IAL EXAMINATIONS -Applicable to Year 13 students

At SMCHS, we offer the current suite of Pearson Edexcel IAL subjects: Accounting and English Literature.

The centre (our school) has been asked to submit a portfolio of assessment evidence for each student for each paper. This evidence **MUST** cover the breadth of the content for that component.

This portfolio of evidence will be graded by a Pearson Examiner.

PEARSON EDEXCEL GCE EXAMINATIONS -Applicable to Year 13 students

At SMCHS, we offer the current suite of Pearson Edexcel GCE subjects: Biology, Business, Chemistry, Economics, Mathematics, Physics, Psychology.

Ofqual has confirmed that regulated qualifications must be based on reliable evidence to secure their comparability with qualifications taken in England and around the world. This means that awarding bodies cannot accept alternative forms of evidence, such as teacher judgement or mock exams.

Pearson Edexcel is committed to ensuring that students have a route to certification. Therefore, for regulated qualifications (in this case GCE suite of subjects), a student who already has a summer 2026 exam entry will be provided an exceptional route to certification through a Pearson **INTERNATIONAL ADVANCED LEVEL** equivalent for this summer series.

The centre (our school) has been asked to submit a portfolio of assessment evidence for each student for each paper. This evidence **MUST** cover the breadth of the content for that component.

This portfolio of evidence will be graded by a Pearson Examiner.

This route is entirely optional for students, and they can of course choose to withdraw from the current series and defer to the June 2027 series.

ONLY THOSE STUDENTS WHO WISH TO WITHDRAW FROM THE CURRENT JUNE 2026 SERIES, MUST send an email (STRICTLY FROM THE PARENT via the PARENT EMAIL ID) to Ms. Vichitra Gabriella on:

vichitra.gabriella-smchs@smgeducation.org to confirm your child's withdrawal from the June 2026 series no later than 18th April 2026.

Parents of those students who wish to certificate this year itself through the Pearson International GCSE certification route, need not send in an email.

Important information about international qualifications and progression
International A-Levels are not regulated by Ofqual. Certificates awarded will clearly show that the qualification is an International one and will not display the Ofqual logo.

Students holding university offers that require a GCE A-Level must check directly with their higher education institution (s) that an International A-level is acceptable to make sure that any offers they hold are still valid. Pearson International qualifications are widely recognised globally, and they are working with UCAS to ensure UK universities are aware of the arrangements in place.

FAQ'S

1) What is the portfolio of evidence that will be sent?

The centre (our school) has been asked to submit a portfolio of assessment evidence for each student for each paper. This evidence MUST cover the breadth of the content for that component. In our case this would be the MOCK EXAMINATION. If Pearson Edexcel, asks for any further evidence, we will furnish it.

2) What is the difference between an International Qualification (IGCSE and IAL) as compared with a Regulated Qualification (GCSE and GCE)?

International qualifications are not regulated by Ofqual. Certificates awarded will clearly show that the qualification is an International one and will not display the Ofqual logo.

3) Will the International Certification Route (IGCSE) impact my progression to the two-year stand-alone GCE programme at St. Marys?

St. Mary's understands the current circumstances. This certification route will not impact the admission criteria. Please see our admission's to A-Level circular attached to this communication.

4) If I choose to defer to the June 2027 examination series, will that impact my progression to the two-year stand-alone GCE programme at St. Mary's?

Students who choose to defer to the June 2027 examination series, will essentially be taking a gap year and MUST NOT APPLY to the 2026-2027 intake for the two-year stand-alone GCE programme at St. Mary's.

5) Will the International Certification Route (IAL) impact my progression to university courses?

Students holding university offers that require a GCE A-Level must check directly with their higher education institution (s) that an International A-level is acceptable to make sure that any offers they hold are still valid. Pearson International qualifications are widely recognised globally, and they are working with UCAS to ensure UK universities are aware of the arrangements in place.

6) Will exam boards change their minds if the conflict stops?

Examination boards have confirmed cancellations, and this decision will not be reversed.

7) Will there be refunds?

Refunds will only be applicable to those students who are withdrawing from the June 2026 series. Students who are certificating in this June 2026 series, are not eligible for any refund.

Please rest assured that we are managing this situation diligently and with care and consideration for our students.

We wish you all safety in your day-to-day routines as we navigate the current uncertainty. Please be reassured of our prayers for everyone.

Yours sincerely,


Mr. Paul Asir Joseph
(Principal)



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OUR REF :

TRN : 104153998000003

DATE: Wednesday, 15th April 2026.

To : Parents of Year Eleven Students

**ADMISSION TO TWO YEAR A-LEVEL GCE PROGRAMME -
UPDATED 15TH April 2026.**

Dear Parents,

Greetings from St. Mary's Catholic High School Dubai. We invite you to read this circular very carefully as it has important information for parents regarding admission to the two-year A-Level GCE Programme.

We would like to point out very clearly that admission to A-Level is not automatic and is a completely new process.

We would also like to bring to your attention that under the British system, a student completes high school with the completion of YEAR 11. Hence the admission to A-Level is then a process of a 'NEW ADMISSION'.

YEAR 11 students must not re-register for the next Academic year when re-registration comes up for other year groups.

The conditions for a student to be considered for a place in A-Levels are as follows.

- **SHOULD HAVE AN EXCELLENT BEHAVIOUR RECORD**
- **4 SUBJECTS TO BE OPTED FOR**
- **Admissions will be MERIT-BASED ACROSS ALL GCSE SUBJECTS (This year, this would take into account both First Term and Mock exams owing to the current conflict circumstances).**
- Hold a high-grade **average** in all subjects (Internal Exams) in Year Eleven.
- Should have not had any serious or repeated disciplinary issues over Years Nine through Eleven.
- Should not have engaged in activities, in or out of school, which tarnish the reputation of the school.
- **Hold a minimum attendance record of 95%.**
- **Be prepared for an entrance exam in the subject opted for that has not been taken at O-Level**

Those students who take Arabic as a First language and Islamic Studies in A-Level will have to maintain a minimum aggregate attendance percentage of 95% for Arabic and / or Islamic Studies lessons, FAILING WHICH STUDENTS WILL NOT BE ISSUED A SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATE/ATTESTED CERTIFICATES OR RECOMMENDATION LETTERS. Students who do not reflect in this 95% aggregate attendance after the first month of enrollment might not be allowed to continue the A-Level programme.

Please note that St. Mary's Catholic High School offers the GCE Advanced Levels Linear Programme which means that we DO NOT OFFER **AS LEVEL CERTIFICATION** at the end of Year 12. This is a standalone qualification, and results are declared only at the end of Year 13.

The whole two-year Programme has to be completed for any equivalency certification.

Please consider all the criteria above while planning ahead with the next phase in your child's educational journey. Parents should also be aware that even if all criteria are met, **competition for places remains very stiff as seats are limited** and therefore, **we strongly recommend that all parents should ensure that their children have a back-up plan. This would include applying to other institutions besides St. Mary's well in advance.**

Thank you for your kind co-operation.

Yours sincerely,



Mr. Paul Asir Joseph
(Principal)

