



Caterham School
May 2016

Mathematics Department – setting policy

Dear Parents

As the Summer session of the school examinations approaches, this document explains the way we decide upon the make up of the sets for each year group. In short, the examination results play the major role in determining sets.

Moving up a set is not a reward for good work, nor is moving down a set a punishment. We put students in the set that is most likely to maximise their grade at the same time as providing sufficient challenge. It is worth noting that large numbers of A and A* grades come from students in lower sets.

Relative performance in the school examinations is taken as a starting point followed by input from the student's current teacher. The final decision lies with the Head of Department.

Second Year:

Following the major summer examinations at the end of the First Year, the students are ranked and put into four or five sets; the sizes of the sets are more or less equal and the topics covered in the Second Year scheme are largely the same for each group, with the 'upper' sets tackling extension material. This enables movement between the sets following tests towards the end of the Autumn term if any changes are thought necessary.

Third Year:

In the Third Year seven or eight sets are created for the whole year group with the upper sets larger than the lower ones. After school examinations at the end of the Autumn term, the setting is looked at again using exam results and teacher input, moving students who have clearly been mis-set. The major summer examinations of the Third Year will then inform the setting for the start of Fourth Year.

Fourth Year/Fifth Year:

Students going into the fourth year in September 2016 will be studying for the 'new' 9-1 IGCSE (first examination Summer 2018).

The top set will accelerate and sit the 'old' IGCSE in the summer of 2017; for them, an Additional Mathematics course will be undertaken in the Fifth Year and examined at the end of the year alongside the 'new' 9-1 IGCSE. In the second set, the 'new' IGCSE course and extension mathematics material will be covered over two years alongside each other and two public examinations are taken at the end of the Fifth Year. This set's extension material will be examined in either the Additional Mathematics course (OCR FSMQ Level 3) or an IGCSE Further Mathematics course (AQA Further Mathematics Level 2). Major school examinations take place in the summer at the end of the Fourth Year, but it is rare that any set changes are made for the Fifth Year.

I hope this information is useful.

Yours sincerely

Anthony Langdon

(Head of Mathematics)