

17th May 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians of 2nd year Students,

The IB Examinations continue to run smoothly, and indeed many students have completed their examinations. The Biology examinations are scheduled for this Wednesday, followed by French on Thursday, and then the examinations finally are over for this generation. Then comes the process of saying goodbye, of the students transitioning into the next phase of their lives. The formal part of that will be “Saying Goodbye” ceremony starting at 10:30am on Sunday, which we plan to livestream for those parents and guardians who wish to be “here” but from afar. This year the ceremony is planned to last around 2 ½ hours.

By Monday afternoon next week, all RBCs new graduates will have left (except for 5 whose flight arrangements have been delayed). With the current Covid-19 wave of infections dropping, new regulations have been issued which appear to allow for RBC to take its 1st year students to a camping site at Schluchsee in the Schwarzwald starting on the Monday afternoon, for a few days of outdoors activities. This means that Campus falls symbolically quiet following the departure of the graduates.

As part of saying goodbye, over the last weeks the teachers, activity leaders, House Tutors and finally Personal Tutors have written a final report for your child, our soon-to-be graduate. Please find a copy attached. None of us is perfect, and this is true also for our students! While many comments are positive, there also are some salutary comments possibly to be remembered at university. I found it moving to read how in so many ways the students have grown over the almost two years.

Often in these final letters I quote from a Personal Tutor comment. Michael Watson, a UWC graduate, founder member of staff at RBC and former member of staff also at UWC Pearson College and UWC Waterford Kamhlaba, is leaving RBC this summer. In his tutor reports he wrote: “It is worth recalling the core values that animate the UWC movement: international and intercultural understanding; celebration of difference; personal responsibility and integrity; mutual responsibility and respect; compassion and service; respect for the environment; a sense of idealism; personal challenge; and action and personal example. In thinking about each of these values, I could think of ways that X has lived them in practice over the past two years. And, of course, most of this has happened as the Covid-19 pandemic has raged around us, and tested us all in diverse ways. The end of a student’s second year can bring mixed emotions; a great sense of relief that exams and other aspects of the intense environment that we create here will be over, as well as excitement about the future, but also a sadness that this particular life experience within this community is ending. It is worth reminding X that although his time at UWC RBC is ending, the UWC experience never really ends, and now he belongs not just to a community of a few hundred in Southern Germany, but to a community of many thousands spread out across the world, and active in all walks of life.”

Thank you to all the parents and guardians who responded to my email concerning Caution Money.

I find saying goodbye difficult, not only to students but also to their Parents and Guardians. I wish that circumstances had allowed many of us to meet; Covid-19 overtook the world and now we cannot even gather with Parents and Guardians for the Closure Ceremony. To you who let your children come to RBC, sometimes too early for your own comfort, thank you. Thank you for your courage in that as well as in holding nerve as the covid pandemic swept around the world. Thank you for believing enough in your child to let them go. Thank you for your support.

With best wishes,

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