

Friday 27 March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

I wanted to write to you specifically to offer you reassurance by beginning to give some clarity regarding how GCSE grades will be awarded this year and what your son/daughter can do in the coming weeks to best benefit from the process.

Firstly, **all GCSE and vocational exams have been cancelled and will not take place.**

Regulators will develop and set out a process that will provide a calculated grade to each student which reflects their performance as fairly as possible, and will work with schools and exam boards to ensure this is consistently applied for all students. The government and the Department for Education (DfE) have not yet confirmed the details of how grades will be awarded but we do have some information about the process:

- Exam boards will be asking teachers, who know their students well, to submit their judgement about the grade that they believe the student would have received if the exams had gone ahead;
- To produce this, teachers will be asked to take into account a range of evidence and data including performance on mock exams and non-exam assessment (e.g. work in books, coursework, individual exam questions);
- Exam boards will then combine this information with other relevant data, including prior attainment (from primary school), and use this information to produce a calculated grade for each student, which will be a best assessment of the work they have put in. There is no information yet about the data that will be used where students do not have prior attainment data;
- The aim is to provide calculated grades to students before the end of July;
- These grades will be indistinguishable from those provided in other years;
- Exam boards aim to ensure that the distribution of grades follows a similar pattern to that in other years, so that this year's students are not disadvantaged;
- Students will be able to appeal their grades if they do not believe the right process has been followed;
- There will also be an option to sit exams early in the next academic year for any students who wish to – and students can also choose to sit exams next summer;

The government and the DfE will soon be issuing advice to schools about how to fairly and robustly submit judgment grades. They are clear that evidence will be important in informing decisions. Therefore, teachers have been reviewing the work of each year 11 student that they teach.

It is likely that your child will have sufficient evidence of the grade at which they are working in the majority of their subjects and that they will have completed their coursework already.

Kind regards,

Lee Sargeant
Headteacher