

RE: Exams update

Wednesday 13th January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

As I promised when I wrote to you previously regarding exams, as soon as more information on qualifications was released, I would update you. Today, we have heard an outline of suggested approaches for assessment of Year 11 and 13 students that will be put forward for consultation. In summary, these suggestions include:

- An affirmation that teacher's judgement of student's grades will be sought.
- This judgement must be backed by a wide variety of evidence.
- It is likely that some of this evidence will be derived from externally set assessments. It is very likely that these will be in the form of mini-assessments or exams that are internally sat, marked and then moderated both internally and externally.
- Quality Assurance will be done internally by school leaders **AND** also externally by the exam boards.
- There will be no algorithm (thank goodness!).
- The date for submission of grades by schools will be made as late as possible.
- Grades should be derived from content taught and not from the entire course.
- Vocational qualifications such as BTEC Sport and iMedia will be awarded in a similar manner to GCSE or A-Level qualifications.
- The Deadline for UCAS submissions has been pushed back and the documents linked below have affirmed that the Universities Minister has pledged to ensure that Universities are not oversubscribed.

Now we know this, can I be absolutely clear that it is imperative that students keep working. Whilst exams are not running in the usual way, students will be assessed on the work that their teachers have set them to do in whatever method of assessment is used.

Please find links to the documents I have summarized:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/letter-from-gavin-williamson-to-simon-lebus>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/951778/SL_to_SOS_2021-01-13.pdf

As you will see from the letter sent from Gavin Williamson to the lead of Ofqual, he has requested that the exams that had been scheduled for February do not go ahead, and instead other methods of assessment are sought. This is massively disappointing for us as a school. The exams that are scheduled for the remainder of January will still go ahead. Mr Schmidt will email students tomorrow with further details on this.

Please be aware that these are only broad proposal guidelines at the moment and will be going through a consultation process and are subject to change.

Thank you for your continued support and as soon as we know any more we will again get in touch.

Yours sincerely

Emma Howard
Head of School