

7<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parent and Carers,

Following yesterday's announcement by the Secretary of State for Education, I am sure that you will by now be aware that the Government plans to replace formal exams this summer with Centre-Assessed Grades (CAG). In principle, this is intended to work in a similar fashion to last year, whereby schools submit to exam boards the grades they think the pupils/students would have achieved, if they had had the opportunity to sit their exams.

There will be a two-week consultation period beginning next week on this issue, so we are unlikely to have more clarity before that time. We hope that the result of this consultation will determine how schools are to calculate CAGs. The Learning Reviews for Year 11 pupils will not take place until we have all of this information to share. New dates will be confirmed as soon as possible. In the meantime, I wish to draw your attention to the following points.

1. Last year, schools were instructed to treat centre-assessed grades as highly confidential. This means that you should not contact teachers to enquire about the grades your son/daughter is likely to achieve. Staff are not permitted to engage in these discussions with pupils/students, and we ask that they behave respectfully by not putting teachers in this difficult position.
2. We understand that by the end of this academic year, pupils/students will have experienced significant disruption to their education across both Key Stages 4 and 5. You have our assurance that we will look very carefully at the assessment data that we have and that we continue to collect in forming a judgement on pupils/students which is both comprehensive and fair.
3. Where possible, we will take further mock examinations and assessments in school. Should the situation mean we are unable to host these, we will complete further assessments online to support our grading process.
4. For students in Year 13 applying to university, UCAS and Higher Education institutions have not yet responded to this latest development. We will explain the implications of this when we have more information. Professional Pathway students who currently have grade-dependent offers of employment, an apprenticeship or a degree apprenticeship, should contact the organisation which issued the offer to clarify whether the terms of the offer still stand.
5. I reiterate the points made in my previous letter that we encourage pupils/students to continue to attend all lessons virtually and to complete all work set. This includes all non-examined assessment in any subject, such as coursework, on which no announcements have been made yet. Please remind son/daughter that:
  - the teachers whose lessons they are attending and whose work they are completing will have a significant input into the final grades;

- the grades submitted by the school will be moderated to ensure that our grading process is robust, so we need as much evidence as possible to support this;
- their continuing work will build study skills and a sound knowledge base for the pursuit of further study and/or employment.

If you have any queries about the above, please do not hesitate to contact Mr Hawkings, Assistant Headteacher i/c Exams, if your son/daughter is in Year 11 or Dr Robertson, Assistant Headteacher/Head of Sixth Form, or a member of the Sixth Form Team, if your son/daughter is in Year 13. We will, of course, continue to keep you updated as more information comes to light.

Kind regards



Katharine Dines  
Headteacher