

25 March 2020

Dear Students in Years 11 and 13

Summer examinations update

We wanted to write to you personally to echo the important messages you have received from your Headteacher over the past few weeks and to clarify what the Government has shared with education sector leaders regarding this summer's examinations. The coronavirus has plunged the world into a state of chaos, and we are all trying to navigate through these unprecedented times and trying desperately to understand how to support each other whilst focusing on the minimising the terrible impact of COVID-19.

You are particularly affected as you have been working hard preparing for your GCSE, A level and vocational examinations this summer and that will undoubtedly cause you uncertainty and anxiety – this is completely natural as you will be concerned about the next phase of your life; be that into Post-16 education, university or into the world of work.

The Government has provided the following guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/further-details-on-exams-and-grades-announced>

In summary, your teachers will submit predicted grades that they believe “fairly reflects the work that they have put in”. The guidance also states that teacher will “take into account a range of evidence and data including performance on mock exams and non-exam assessment – clear guidance on how to do this fairly and robustly will be provided to schools and colleges. The exam boards will then combine this information with other relevant data, including prior attainment, 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 will be an opportunity for those who wish to appeal against one or more of their predicted grades to sit an examination early in the Autumn Term, although it is unclear how or when that will be organised at this stage. This is one of several reasons why it is important that you keep up with your studies over the months ahead.

We completely understand there are many questions yet to be answered and everyone involved in your education is anxiously waiting additional information from the Government. Please be assured your teachers and Headteacher will do everything possible to ensure you get the grades you deserve based on your efforts up to this point. Some of you will be completing coursework and will be submitting that in the normal way, as this is likely to be part of the evidence that your school will have to submit to support your predicted grade, and your school will help you to ensure your efforts are appropriately acknowledged and rewarded.

However, it is important to consider that learning is more than just gaining examination results and I would urge you to continue with your studies during this uncertain phase of your education. Learning is a life-long skill and the current situation provides an opportunity for you to develop some of those skills you will use in the next phase of your life. Developing skills such as independent learning, research and



conceptual thinking, improving revision techniques, honing a variety of communication skills, developing I.T. capability, including those that support remote/virtual learning, will stand you in good stead for the future and I would encourage you to find the right balance of looking after yourself and those close to you whilst continuing to focus on your future.

Your school will update any news regarding your examinations on the school's website and I would encourage you to follow the Department for Education (DfE) website for the latest updates. The website address is <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>

We are also conscious that your normal school experience was cut short and the important social elements of a being part of a school community have been sadly affected. I know your school is already thinking about how they can redress that when we, as a country, recover from COVID-19.

Stay safe and very best wishes for the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Colin Sinclair".

Colin Sinclair
Education Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andy Yarrow".

Andy Yarrow
CEO