

22nd January 2021

Updates for Parents & Carers of Year 11 & Year 13 Students due to sit GCSE Exams or Vocational and Technical Qualifications in Summer 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that this letter finds you and your family well.

As you will be aware, the Secretary of State for Education announced in early January that GCSE exams scheduled for this summer are cancelled. It was also stated that written exams for Vocational and Technical qualifications should not take place. The Department for Education and Ofqual have set out proposals that outline the process for awarding grades in 2021, given the exceptional circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic. In brief, the **proposed methodology** for awarding **GCSE grades** is as follows:

- The final assessment grade will be determined by subject teachers towards the end of the academic year, at about the time students would have taken their exams
- This grade will be based on teacher assessment and will reflect the standard at which the students is performing
- To help teachers make objective decisions, exam boards should provide guidance and training, and make available a set of papers, which teachers use with their students as part of their assessment
- The consultation seeks views on whether such papers should be provided and, if so, what form they should take (could they, for example, use materials from previous past papers), when they should be made available, and whether their use should be mandated. Teachers should draw on a range of broader evidence of a student's work in making their final assessment.

The **proposed timeline** for these arrangements, which forms part of the consultation process is:

- students would continue with their education during this academic year
- students would be assessed by their teachers in a period beginning in May into early June
- teachers would submit grades to the exam boards by mid-June
- external quality assurance (QA) by the exam boards would be ongoing throughout June
- results would be issued to students once the QA process is complete, most likely in early July
- student appeals could be submitted immediately following the issue of results and would first be considered by schools and colleges.

For **Vocational and Technical qualifications**, it is proposed that written exams do not take place in May and June, however, internal assessments should continue to go ahead remotely for all learners

where possible. The intention is that no student should be disadvantaged as compared to their peers taking a similar qualification.

The Department for Education is seeking views on several features of the exceptional arrangements for awarding GCSEs and Vocational and Technical qualifications which include Level 3 BTecs in 2021. The consultation documents are available via the links below and you can respond online:

GCSE Consultation

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-how-gcse-as-and-a-level-grades-should-be-awarded-in-summer-2021>

Vocational & Technical Qualifications (including Sixth Form BTecs)

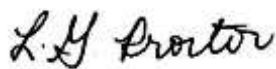
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-alternative-arrangements-for-the-award-of-vtqs-and-other-general-qualifications-in-2021>

If you wish to partake in the consultation process please complete the consultation form by the deadline of 29th January 2021.

Finally, as I have said in previous correspondence, Year 11 and Year 13 students will continue to follow their timetabled lessons virtually so that staff can build up supporting materials and evidence for their teacher assessed grades. We have been working hard to ensure that students are able to access Google Classrooms and take part in the virtual lessons and should you have any issues with this then please contact school. It is absolutely vital that students continue to work hard and engage with the online sessions and the work set for them. We will remain in contact with you with any updates as and when they are announced by the government.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank-you again for your continued support.

Yours faithfully



Miss L Proctor
Principal