



6<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Dear all,

I am writing to give a further update on how grades will be awarded following the cancellation of the summer exams. We have now had additional guidance, which you may have seen through the news, but I thought it would be helpful to summarise below for you. These currently apply to A Level / GCSE but we imagine something similar will be put in place for vocational qualifications.

Essentially, we will provide the exam board with the grade that we think each student would have achieved if they had been able to carry on working and sit the exams in the normal way. We also have to rank each student in order for each subject, so if they feel we have been too generous or too harsh, they know which students need to move up or down a grade. Results will then be published in the normal way (whatever that now means) and will be provided by the normal date in August, but possibly sooner. We are not expecting to send them data until May, so it will not be for a while.

Probably the best part of the announcement is that there appears to be no requirement for any child to produce any further evidence as part of the process. I hope this means you can stop worrying about that and relieve at least one small pressure over the coming weeks. There is nothing you can do to affect your grades, so my advice is to put it out of your mind until the summer.

A few points to note:

- We are not allowed to tell you what grade we sent off for you, so please don't ask.
- Any pressure, however gentle, placed on staff will be reported to the exam board and put your grade at risk.
- We will take into account a lot of different information; it will not be based purely on mock exam results which I know was worrying many of you. Classwork, assessments, homework and how much revision and studying you were doing before we closed will all be taken into consideration.
- We will put in place our own system to make it as fair as possible, it will not simply be down to your individual teacher to decide. This would be unfair pressure on them and some of you might worry that different teachers might make different judgements. The person responsible for these grades in the end is me and I will ensure the grades are as objective as possible.

Of course any system put in place in these circumstances will seem unfair to someone and until the results are published we simply won't know for sure whether it has worked. I think it is worth remembering that judging our students' whole school careers based purely on hours and hours of terminal exams, was already not a fair way of judging their achievements, so I think we have to remain optimistic and hope that if anything, this might end up a more balanced way to recognise your achievements.

Take care and try to stay positive.

Shaun Simmons  
Principal