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8th December 2021

Year 12 and Year 13 Students

Dear Pupil/Parent/Carer

I should like to update you on the situation regarding all GCSE and A-Level examinations for 2022.

The DfE and the examinations regulatory body, Ofqual, have published initial guidance for schools regarding GCSE and A-Level examinations for 2022 which includes the need for schools to have contingency plans in place in the event that examinations are cancelled this year.

It is important to note that the Government is clear that students entering for GCSEs and A-Levels in 2022 should expect to take exams in the summer and should complete any non-exam assessments in the usual way throughout the academic year.

It has been confirmed that, in recognition of the disruptions that pupils have experienced over the last two years, students will receive some additional support for the exams in addition to some amendments to the examined content. These are subject specific and will already have been recognised by teaching staff and implemented. The amendments include the following:

- Students taking GCSEs in all other subjects will be given advance information about the focus of the content of the exams to support their revision.
- Students taking GCSE Mathematics will be given in their exams copies of formulae
- Students taking A-Levels will be given advance information about the focus of the content of the exams to support their revision.

We have been informed that advance information for GCSE and A levels will be published no later than 7 February 2022.

Contingency Plans for 2022 examinations

In the unlikely event that exams have to be cancelled in summer 2022, students' grades will instead be determined by their teachers, using a Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) approach similar to that used in summer 2021.

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TAGs are based on teachers' assessment of their students' work and will only be determined if instructed to do so by the DfE. All grades for examined elements of exams will need to be conducted under exam conditions as we do with the Mock Examinations and Progress Tests.

To ensure we have enough evidence, if necessary, to determine TAGs, if we will be following DfE guidance and will use the planned assessment points to collate evidence for 3 assessment sittings during the year. These are not expected to significantly increase the number of assessments/exams that pupils would normally complete and will be arranged to coincide with the planned dates for this year:

- Spring Term (Mock examinations in February)
- Spring Term (Progress Test Week: end of March)

An additional date, if necessary will be:

- Summer Term

Pupils will be informed of their performance following all assessments, but it is important to note that, in the event of using Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs), pupils will not be told what their final GCSE grade is, as marking will not have been subject to exam board moderation.

Teachers will also be required to retain evidence for any potential TAGs and, as such, will not be able to return all original test papers.

The school will continue to conduct all assessments in accordance with examination guidelines including ensuring exam concessions to those pupils who have access arrangements. With this in mind, it is important that those pupils who are awarded extra time, a scribe, a reader and/or a word processor make full use of these resources.

Below is a link to a letter to students from the DfE that will be useful for you to share with your child. This can also be found on the school website in the folder in the folder 'Summer Exams 2022':

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-letters-arrangements-for-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2022/letter-to-students>

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Full guidance on the contingency for assessments 2022 can be found on the link below. These can also be found on the school website in the folder 'Summer Exams 2022':

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-contingency-arrangements-for-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-summer-2022/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-other-exam-centres-on-contingency-arrangements-for-students-entering-gcses-as-and-a-levels-the-advanced-extension>

I am very pleased with the way in which pupils are taking advantage of the additional support offered by their teachers and for their hard work this term. I should like to apologise for the length of this letter and will keep you notified of any changes to the DfE's current arrangements.

It is important to reiterate that, at this stage, the Government is clear that all pupils should expect to take exams in the summer and complete all non-exam assessments in the usual way throughout the year.

I should like to wish you all the best for the forthcoming weeks and for a peaceful and restful Christmas.

Yours sincerely



Miss S Paige
Principal