

Dear Parent/ Carer

We are writing to you following the government's updated guidance on Friday about the cancellation of GCSE and A-Level exams in the summer because of the Coronavirus epidemic.

Firstly, we recognise the stress and shock that this will have caused students and their families, and we want to reassure you that we will support you and your child through this difficult time and work tirelessly to ensure that our students are not unfairly affected by the government's decision. However, we would also ask you to recognise we, in common with all schools, do not have all the answers at present, and that it may take some time until we are fully clear about what is required.

The DfE's full guidance can be found at the following link: [DfE Guidance](#)

In summary, the key points of the government's guidance are as follows:

- *Ofqual will develop and set out a process that will provide a calculated grade to each student which reflects their performance as fairly as possible, and will work with the exam boards to ensure this is consistently applied for all students.*
- *The exam boards will be asking teachers, who know their students well, to submit their judgement about the grade that they believe the student would have received if exams had gone ahead.*
- *Teachers 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. The aim is to provide these calculated grades to students before the end of July.*
- *Ofqual and exam boards will communicate with teachers' representatives before finalising an approach, to ensure that it is as fair as possible.*
- *In terms of a permanent record, the grades will be indistinguishable from those provided in other years. They will also aim to ensure that the distribution of grades follows a similar pattern to that in other years, so that this year's students do not face a systematic disadvantage as a consequence of these extraordinary circumstances.*

Once the grades have been calculated, if students are disappointed with the awarded grade, they have three options:

- *They can appeal if they feel the processes followed for calculating the grade are unfair.*
- *There will be an opportunity for students to 're-sit' the exam at the earliest opportunity once schools are open, possibly September/October 2020*
- *They can sit the exams in the summer of 2021.*

Unfortunately, we do not have any further details about any of the above at present.

Year 11 teachers clearly have a lot of information about their students, and this went into the Module 3 report that parents/carers received recently. However, we recognise that this was a partial prediction, not a final one, and that every student is different, with some students working hard since the start of the year and others only now starting to show what they can do.

For this reason, our current advice to all Year 11 parents is that students should, in their own best interest, continue to work as hard at home as they would have done in school. This means:

- Students should complete their Practice Exams this week according to the timetable that was issued on the VLE this morning, and 'submit' them by Tuesday 31st March using the CamScanner App or Microsoft Office Lens App, which they can download on their phones. To support social distancing, they should not bring the exam papers into school.

- They should complete the exams as much as possible in exam conditions and in the correct time allocation.
- In between exams, they should follow their revision timetable and revise for practice exams due to take place later in the week.
- Once the exams are completed, they will be issued with new work for next week, that they should complete according to their teachers' instructions.

Students who do not complete all practice exams to the best of their ability by the deadline set may be putting themselves at a disadvantage. However, if a student is ill, please notify us of your child's 'absence' by emailing hkyriacou@charthernodulwich.org.uk or letting us know via the VLE, and naturally we will provide them with an extension.

We recognise that we cannot be 100% sure about students following exam conditions at home, and we will use our professional judgement when interpreting results. We also understand that motivation may be difficult for some students, but we want to emphasise that completing the practice exams and any subsequent work issued by teachers properly is the right thing to do, because it:

- a) Provides us with more information on which to base our teacher assessments/ predictions.
- b) Provides students with a focus for their work at a time when we still do not know the full situation.
- c) Supports their overall learning and their deepening understanding of their GCSE subjects, which is important in itself, but also important preparation for 6th form/ College.
- d) Supports preparation for exams that may have to be taken in September/ October.

As the days and weeks progress we will learn more details about the government's guidance, and we will review and update the school's approach accordingly. In the meantime, we thank you for your patience and would ask that you go through this with your child and ensure that they complete the Practice Exams this week to the best of their ability, following the published timetable and exam regulations.

Once again, we completely understand the uncertainty and stress that the current situation will have created in some of our students and their families. Please feel free to contact the school, particularly Ms Parvez, Mr Snell or your child's tutor, if you have any questions about this. As we have said many times, this is a uniquely challenging situation for our society, but as a school community we will work together and get through this.

Yours Faithfully

Christian Hicks
Headteacher

Mike Snell
Head of Key Stage 4