

April 3rd 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

GCSE and A level Examination Update – Mr Frazer, Dr Mackay and Mr Detheridge

Today, Ofqual has published information on the processes it is going to use to determine students GCSE, AS and 'A' Level grades this summer. As far as possible the same processes will be used to assess vocational qualifications, for example, BTECs. A summary of this guidance has been included below but the full statement may be found using the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/how-gcse-as-a-levels-will-be-awarded-in-summer-2020?utm_source=68820985-2466-4b6a-806f-1666ceaad64d&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

Summary of information

Exam boards will be contacting schools, colleges and other exam centres after Easter asking them to submit, by a deadline that will be no earlier than 29th May 2020, the following:

- a centre assessment grade for every student in each of their subjects: that is, the grade they would be most likely to have achieved if they had sat their exams and completed any non-exam assessment. Judgements should balance different sources of evidence such as:
 - classwork
 - bookwork
 - any participation in performances in subjects such as music, drama or PE
 - any non-exam assessment – whether or not complete
 - the results of any assignments or mock exams
 - previous examination results – for example, for any re-sitting students or those with relevant AS qualifications
 - any other records of student performance over the course of study

Ofqual has also been very clear that centres must not share their centre assessment grades with students, parents or carers, under any circumstances. This is to protect the integrity of centres' judgements.

Further details on the examinations which may take place *"at the earliest opportunity"* when schools return after the closure are not yet available. **When we are made aware of these details, we will inform parents/carers and our pupils/students.**

A letter for GCSE and A Level students has also been produced by Ofqual; we have included this at the end of our newsletter today.

After the Easter holiday the Senior Leadership Team will work with Heads of Department and other teachers so we can ensure our assessments are objective and fair to all.

Easter Holiday Assignments – Mr Frazer

The Trust is setting some **optional** enrichment work for students to do during the Easter break; this will help us to stay in touch with our learners and parents/carers. In response to some of the constructive comments which parents/carers have given us this week, we are amending our practice so that in future all work, including the optional **enrichment** tasks will go live on a Monday, and not on a Sunday. Secondly, so that no child feels they must do the holiday enrichment work we have taken the decision that it will not be assessed. **There is no requirement to submit the work completed during the Easter break.** However, if learners wish to send it in, it will be looked at and we will celebrate great work in the newsletter after Easter.

Enrichment Activities - Mr Lewis

We have also published information on other **Enrichment Activities** today on in the Distance Learning Area of the website which has been put together by Mr Lewis. There are some really good ideas for the whole family including reading, watching documentaries and a weekly play. I know Mr Lewis plans that we refresh the ideas periodically. You may find something to do which really interests you. Good luck. We hope that lots of you enjoy at least some of them.

https://30a0a3ae-f989-45df-a221-a3b2b6b596a1.filesusr.com/ugd/675635_caa49b1a0cc04bf1b632f16ccee2647f.pdf

Show My Homework - Mr Frazer

We have asked staff to look at SMH and remove **a number of ongoing tasks that have been on SMH since before the distance learning programme started**. We believe that by removing these tasks, it should help to reduce the pressure some learners and their parents/carers have felt over the last week. It should reduce the number of active tasks learners have showing on the system.

The Teaching and Learning Team is also working on a range of other developments which we will share with you soon, including how we plan to give feedback to students and to broaden the approaches used by students in their learning.

Free School Meals – Mrs McMenemy

Just a quick reminder from Mrs McMenemy: please do not forget to respond by **midnight tonight** to our letter on **Free School Meals** to let us know whether you wish to move to the new e-voucher system or, if you prefer to continue to receive food parcels. Please respond if you can to assist our planning. If you did not get our FSM letter and think you should have done, there is a copy on the Distance Learning part of the website [see letters April 2nd]

Library Highlights – Miss Chatley

It has been an exceptionally strange term for everyone. I wanted to highlight some 'good news stories' that have taken place in the Library at the beginning of this term (which feels a very long time ago!)

Tree planting

At the end of February, we were joined by very enthusiastic pupils from **Thomas Johnson Lower School** to help our Library leaders with planting trees in our Peace Garden.

Thank you so much to the pupils and Jo Roberts from Marston Vale Forest Centre for their help. Our Library Leaders were very welcoming and a true credit to the school!



Holly Bourne – Author Visit

On World Book Day this year, we had acclaimed and popular teen author Holly Bourne visit us for the day, talking to pupils across all year groups. Holly was particularly impressed with our pupils and really glad to have visited – testament to this being her social media post whilst on the train back to London! Many thanks to John Wheeler, who supported the event with his Councillor Ward Funding.



Goodbye – from Miss Chatley

At the end of this term, I will be leaving Wootton Academy Trust to take up a new challenge at another school.

Unfortunately, because of the current circumstances, I have not been able to say goodbye to many friends, colleagues and amazing pupils that I see day in, day out.

To say I have enjoyed my three and a half years would be an understatement – and I sincerely hope that the Library continues to grow with you all. Please continue to ask questions, give suggestions and support Mrs Blunt and whoever takes the reins in the future.

As J. K. Rowling once said, 'if you don't like to read, you haven't found the right book.' There is a book out there for each and every one of you – I hope you find it if you haven't already.

Thank you, Wootton Academy Trust.

Miss Chatley, Library Manager

You will recall we promoted our excellent *Students Bulletin*, which includes a wide range of different things of interest to learners, is published weekly and is located in the *Distance Learning* part of the school and college website. This is where we upload our weekly assembly. Some of you commented that you were looking forward to looking at these. The first one was on Resilience, the second on Heroes.

Next Steps Opportunities Bulletin for Kimberley College students - Mrs Ashby

Mrs Ashby has produced a *Next Steps Opportunities Bulletin* for Kimberley College students; this will be also be on the website shortly. **However, so that all parents and carers can see the range of activities and opportunities that are available we are referring to it in today's letter.** Mrs Ashby anticipates that this bulletin will be published monthly. We are publishing it as a separate appendix to this letter.

We plan to send an update bulletin out with more information on our developing practice and also with more of your feedback over the next two weeks. In the meantime, please continue to be safe.

Yours sincerely

Michael Gleeson
Executive Principal
Wootton Academy Trust



GCSE, AS and A level students in England

3 April 2020

A message for all GCSE, AS and A level students this summer

I understand how unsettling the past weeks have been for you, since the [announcement that exams have been cancelled this summer, and that you are urgently waiting for news](#). I wanted to let you know what we are doing to provide you with grades. Our over-riding aim in this is to be fair to students this summer and to make sure you are not disadvantaged in your progress to sixth form, college, university, apprenticeships, training or work because of these unprecedented conditions.

How will grades be calculated?

Your school or college will be asked to send exam boards two pieces of information for each of your subjects, based on what they know about your work and achievements:

- the grade they believe you were most likely to get if teaching, learning and exams had happened as planned
- within each subject, the order of students at your school or college, by performance, for each grade. This information will be used to standardise judgements – allowing fine tuning of the standard applied across schools and colleges

Your school or college will consider a range of things like your classwork and homework; your results in assignments and any mock exams; any non-exam assessment or coursework you might have done; and your general progress during your course.

This information will allow us, with exam boards, to standardise grades across schools and colleges, to make sure that, as far as possible, results are fair and that students are not advantaged or disadvantaged because their schools or colleges are more generous or harsh than others when

making those judgements. That means the final grade you get could be different from the one your school or college sends to the exam board.

Do I need to complete any new work for my school/college to submit a grade?

Your school or college is not required to set additional mock exams or homework for your centre assessment grade, and you won't be disadvantaged if you were not set, or were unable to complete, any work given out after schools were closed.

Can I see the grades my school/college submits for me?

No, this information will be confidential. Please don't ask your teachers, or anyone else at your school or college, to tell you the grades they will be sending to the exam boards or where they have placed you in the order of students; they will not be allowed to share this with you.

I am a private candidate – what does this mean for me?

If you are a private candidate (for example, home-schooled, following distance-learning programmes or studying independently) the centre you are entering with should include you where the head teacher or principal is confident that they and their staff have seen sufficient evidence of your achievement to make an objective judgement. We are urgently exploring whether there are alternative options for those students who do not have an existing relationship with a centre and who need results this summer to progress. Unfortunately this is unlikely to be possible for all private candidates, some of whom may instead need to take exams in the autumn to get their grades.

We appreciate that this is a matter of real concern to private candidates and will provide an update as soon as possible. We have asked organisations that represent universities and FE colleges to consider the steps that providers could take when making admissions decisions this summer for any private candidates who do not receive a grade. They have told us that they believe that institutions will consider a range of other evidence and information for these students to allow them to progress wherever possible.

When will I get my results?

We're working hard to get results out as soon as is possible – results won't be delayed after the dates they were expected in August, and ideally they will be issued a little earlier, so you can have the certainty you need.

Can I take my exams another time?

We are working with exam boards to offer additional exams in the autumn term as soon as it is possible to do so. We'll let you know about these in the coming weeks.

The information we have published covers GCSEs, AS and A levels, plus Extended Project Qualifications and Additional Extension Awards in maths. You can find out more about which qualifications and students are included, and the current arrangements for those which are not, in our [detailed guidance](#); along with answers to other questions that you and your parents or carers might have. We will keep updating our guidance as new

information becomes available, including to share details about vocational and technical qualifications as soon as we can, so please keep an eye on our website.

Please be reassured that the grades you get this summer will look exactly the same as in previous years, and they will have equal status with universities, colleges and employers, to help you move forward in your lives as planned.

With every best wish,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S Collier". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Sally Collier
Chief Regulator, Ofqual