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Success with Care

Headteacher: Mr M. J. Cooper

Ref: TDA/SDU

12th March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers and Students,

I am writing to give you an update regarding the awarding of final grades following the cancellation of all GCSE, AS and A-Level exams.

It is important to emphasise that full details on the procedures being implemented are still to be issued to schools and therefore further, more detailed information will be provided at a later date. The information released so far by the DfE can be accessed via:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/965648/6749-3_Summer_2021_GQs_-_Info_for_Heads_of_Centre.pdf

The precise guidance from examination boards that schools are awaiting is scheduled to arrive at the end of March 2021. Nevertheless, we absolutely understand the anxiety that the uncertainty around the cancellation of exams has caused and would like to provide you with as much certainty as we can at this stage with the information we have.

In line with government expectations students in Year 11 and Year 13 will be in school for as long as possible to enable staff to cover as much of the curriculum as possible; that is to say students in Year 11 and Year 13 will be taught in school until Friday 28th May 2021. This will allow students to not only benefit from additional learning time in the classroom but will also allow them to experience a degree of normality in what has been an otherwise tumultuous year. This means that the students will finish at the half-term break. We are exploring different plans to support students from this date onwards in making the transition to the next stage, and information will be issued in due course.

Whilst we await further guidance and information, we can share with you that AS and A-Level results day will be Tuesday 10th August and GCSE results day will be Thursday 12th August. Further details about results days will be shared in the summer term.

The time between now and Friday 28th May 2021 is essential for teaching to fulfil the grading expectations of the consultation which clearly states, ***‘that grades should be based on teachers’ assessment of the standard at which students are performing and that the grades should indicate the students’ demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills.’*** Face to face teaching in school for the next few months will enable this to happen and will also ensure students are able to move onto their next phase of learning without impediment.

Ofqual expects ***‘teachers will make a ‘holistic’ judgement of each student’s performance on a range of evidence’***. Examination boards will be giving guidance to schools on what the range of evidence will include, however, in order for the grades to be meaningful, further in school assessment will inform the grading



process as will NEA (non-examined assessment). Students should therefore continue working on their NEA and be guided by their teachers with regards to completion and deadlines where this is applicable.

Students will soon receive their SPR which is a holistic view of the grade their teachers would project them to get this summer based on evidence so far. The final centre assessed grade will be decided from a **portfolio of assessment** that is undertaken within school over the duration of the Key Stage and will include a range of sources from work completed in lessons, work completed remotely, work before lockdown, unit tests, homework and other ongoing summative forms of assessment. We will continue gathering evidence which will include the completion of assessments under controlled conditions. These controlled assessments will provide one piece of evidence which will feed into the faculty discussions to formulate the final centre assessed grades. **The final centre assessed grades will not be based on any one grade alone, such as controlled assessments or end of unit tests, but will be awarded based on the portfolio of assessment.**

Year Group	Ongoing Formative Assessment	Controlled Summative Assessments	Final teaching Day	Submission Date to the Exam Board	Results Day
Year 11	8 th March-28 th May 2021	30 th April- 7 th May 2021	28 th May 2021	18 th June 2021	12th August 2021
Year 12/13	8 th March-28 th May 2021	7th May – 14th May 2021	28 th May 2021	18 th June 2021	10th August 2021

The school will use the **portfolio of assessment** to provide a centre-assessed grade for the exam board. It is anticipated we will implement a similar procedure to the thorough and rigorous one that worked effectively last academic year. The finalised plans for the system will be implemented once the detailed guidance from examination boards has been received. Nonetheless, key features will be in place, including: the use of a range of evidence from the portfolio of assessment; consideration of performance across the entirety of the Key Stage taught curriculum; moderation and discussion at faculty level; analysis of data and evidence and the implementation of quality assurance procedures at different stages.

As per the Ofqual guidance all centre assessed grades will need to be countersigned by two members of teaching staff alongside a Head of Centre declaration. In making this declaration we will be confirming that all grades have been checked for accuracy by the team in school.

For this reason, we are only able to make declarations on courses we deliver in school and for candidates who have met the same evidence threshold as all other students. Therefore, we cannot quality assure and counter sign examination grades for private candidates who wish to receive a grade this summer.

The Government has also stated that a full examination series will run in the autumn term for those candidates who wish to sit exams. As soon as we have further information about the autumn series of examinations, we will share them.

Further information about the grading and appeals process will be shared with you in due course when it has been published and processed. In the meantime, please be reminded that teachers are unable to share information about precise grades.

If you have any questions, please contact me at tdavies@dronfield.derbyshire.sch.uk rather than contacting individual teachers which could compromise the process of awarding centre-assessed grades and could even potentially constitute malpractice.

We will do everything we can to answer any questions you have within the framework we are working within.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding.



Mrs T Davies
Deputy Headteacher