

27th March 2020

Dear Year 12 and 13 Students, Parents and Carers

I am writing to update you on the current situation regarding College closure and the cancellation of exams. As you will be aware this is a changing situation and we are expecting updates in the next few days. This is based on the latest information from the Department of Education and UCAS.

What we do know:

- All A Level, CAMTEC and BTEC exams for the Summer 2020 series have been cancelled. They will not be reinstated no matter what happens
- Year 13 students will have A Level, CAMTEC and BTEC 'calculated grades' from teacher assessments, whole-school historic achievement and individual student's prior attainment. The 'calculated grades' will be moderated externally by exam boards to ensure the grade distribution follows a similar pattern to previous year so that no student is disadvantaged in these extraordinary circumstances. Please remember that the grade teachers submit is not guaranteed to be the grade you receive. It is only one piece of information that exam boards will use to calculate your grade. We have been promised that we will have more details of how this process will work next week
- Year 13 'calculated grades' are expected to be released before the end of July 2020. I will contact you when we know the exact date
- Year 13 students studying for AS exams will also be awarded a 'calculated grade'.
- Year 13 students will have the option to sit an exam in 2021 if you are unhappy with your 'calculated grade'. It is also hoped that there will be an opportunity to sit an exam this year if you are unhappy with your 'calculated grade'.
- UCAS are extending their decision deadline by two weeks. UCAS have already emailed all students about this and have asked all universities to not make any Unconditional Offers from this week

What information are we still waiting to hear?

- Dates of 2020 exams and 2021 exams – we still await information about when and how this can happen for those who opt to take an exam if unhappy with calculated grades
- If students opt to sit exams in 2020 or 2021, will those grades override any Summer 2020 ‘calculated grades’? We wait to hear which grade would override the other, e.g. if students opt to sit a 2020 or 2021 exam and the result is lower than the ‘calculated grade’, which grade would stand? We do not know anything on this yet.

Our College advice:

- All Year 13 students to keep all notes and work done this year. If you have any coursework or NEA which you have done, send it to us and it will help us to decide our recommendation for your ‘calculated grade’. If you can complete it, you should. If you are unable to complete it because College is closed, send us what you have done so far
- All Year 13 students should undertake wider reading to prepare for University undergraduate courses. Look up your course at University on their website and find out typical Year 1 content and start reading around the topics. Contact the university yourself if you want more advice or help with this
- Year 12 students should continue with A Level, BTEC and CAMTEC courses as much as possible. Work is being set daily on Show My Homework and we are looking at expanding into using other platforms as well soon. Later this year subject teachers, tutors and I will be writing your references for University application or jobs. How well you have coped with independent learning will be a big part of that reference
- If you have still not made your final University decision – do not rush your choice. Take advantage of the extended deadline to consider your options. Please feel free to email me for advice
- I will continue to issue updates on grades when new information is announced
- Be reassured that we will provide as much support as we can over the coming period. We know just how anxious you all are.

Finally, and most importantly, please follow the government’s advice regarding social distancing to reduce the spread of the virus so the NHS can cope. In the coming weeks, the priority of all of us should be to keep safe, look after our families and help in any way we can within the community to protect lives and support NHS workers on the frontline.

Be safe. Be positive. Let this period bring out the best in us. As the great Tom Hanks said, “This too shall pass”.

Yours sincerely

Mr John Golding
Assistant Headteacher
Head of Sixth Form