



HAMPSTEAD SCHOOL

Learning together Achieving together

31 March 2020

Coronavirus COVID-19 Examination Update for GCSE, BTEC and A level students

Dear all

I hope this letter finds you healthy and well in this unsettling and unusual time for our students, families and teachers. I am writing to update you regarding current information about the summer examination season and how grades will be determined for our students this year. As you know, examinations have been cancelled this summer. As yet, no final decisions/ instructions have been issued to schools regarding how the awarding of grades will be determined or what information schools have to submit to examination boards. The key information from the Department of Education is summarised below:

- Grades will reflect performance as fairly as possible and 'be indistinguishable' from grades given to students in other years.

GCSEs, AS and A Levels

- Ofqual and all examination boards will agree a consistent approach to how grades are calculated. Our examinations officer has been informed of national meetings this week to finalise the details of this approach and the intention is to inform schools as soon as possible "in April" and "before Easter". We hope for clarity by the end of this week.
- Teachers will provide **predicted grades** but the exact nature of what evidence should inform the predicted grade is currently undisclosed. It will likely take into account evidence such as mock exams and non-exam assessment.
- Exam boards will then use data, such as prior attainment, to decide on a final calculated grade:
 - GCSEs: this could include (but not exclusively) key stage 2 results
 - A-levels: this could include (but not exclusively) GCSE results

Vocational Qualifications

- Again, the exact nature of how assessments will be made is not finalised but it is likely awarding bodies will also use evidence already available, which could include assessments that students have already completed, to confirm final calculated grades.



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- It has been brought to our attention that some students may have difficulty accessing resources to complete assignments/ coursework whilst studying during the school closure. If this is the case, for whatever reason, please ensure you inform your teacher of the nature of this difficulty, in order to inform examination boards and accommodate any judgements that may subsequently be made.
- Over the coming weeks, it may, unfortunately, be the case that some students will experience bereavement or difficulties in studying due to illness and recovery. Should this happen, please inform your teacher and the examinations officer in school in order for us to inform examination boards under the special considerations/ dispensation process. As with all examinations, any representations made may or may not influence the grade awarded.

Students' results

- Examination boards aim to give students calculated grades by the usual time in August.
- Students should be assured that these grades are “indistinguishable” from those given in other years.
- 6th Form colleges will accept the awarded grades as if they had been determined by examinations in the usual way.
- Universities have been encouraged ‘to be flexible and do all they can to support students and ensure they can progress to higher education’.

Further steps

- It is important students continue with their studies and complete set work to the best of their abilities because:
 - Until we have a definitive set of instructions it is possible any work assessed may still influence the grades your teachers submit.
 - You have an entitlement to complete the course of study you have chosen and/ or been studying for.
 - The knowledge gained will still be useful and relevant in any future course of study undertaken – do not disadvantage your futures.
- There will be opportunities to sit exams “early” in the next academic year, or in summer 2021, if students do not feel their grade reflects their performance. So, continuing to study and complete any work set is preparation for any examination taken.
- If students don't feel the right process has been followed in their case, there is an option to appeal.



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I completely sympathise with all students who may feel disappointed with the cancellation of exams, or who feel worried about their future academic success. **Please trust us to do the best for each student, holistically, in whatever method to determine grades is eventually decided and please refrain from contacting individual members of staff to request specific grades in specific subjects awarded.** This is unhelpful and could potentially jeopardise the integrity of the process once it is communicated to us.

I will keep you informed when more information becomes available. In the meantime, I am available to be contacted by email if you or your child has any further significant concerns.

During this time, I hope you and those close to you, all stay healthy and safe.

Yours faithfully



Dr Adam Hadley



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