



St Andrew the Apostle



Greek Orthodox School

08 Jan. 21

Dear Parents and Carers,

In light of the rapidly changing announcements regarding Year 11 and Year 13, I am writing to update you on the current situation.

The statement by Gavin Williamson on Wednesday has provided some clarity, but there is still much that is left unanswered. We now have confirmation that the GCSE and BTEC examinations due to take place this summer have been cancelled, and that students will be awarded teacher-assessed grades in place of this, similar to last year. We have also had reassurance that there will be no algorithm used this year. There are however some distinct differences this time around:

- Firstly, in March 2020 we entered this process with a considerable amount of assessment data from internal exams in Summer 2019 and mock exams from November 2019 and February 2020; due to the disruption caused by Coronavirus restrictions, we don't have the same range of data this time around.
- Secondly, now there is no algorithm from the start, it is unclear what moderation process will be applied to the awarding of teacher-assessed grades. The BBC reports that "the Ofqual exam watchdog will now have to devise how this will work" without giving further detail of how or when they will do this.

We know that a consultation is going to take place. We are therefore left with plenty of questions: in particular, by what date we need to submit grades, what sort of moderation there may be and what sort of evidence might be expected. The school will be discussing these issues with the Trust in the coming days, but it is very likely that we will be running internal assessments for all students who would have faced public exams and that these assessments could potentially take place prior to the Summer exam weeks in June and July.

We are currently operating on the assumption that there will be similarities to last year's method and process, meaning teachers will need to use a range of evidence in order to reach their judgements; this includes mock exam results, attendance data, class work and homework, as well as an attitude to learning and behaviour that would indicate progression and improvement.

Therefore, it is important that all students attend and engage with their online lessons, and complete and submit assigned tasks as these may be needed to contribute to decisions about grading. This is not to say that every piece of work will be graded or assessed as if it were an exam-style task, nor are we expecting students to be able to currently perform at the standard they will be able to by the summer as it is crucial to remember there are still six months of this academic year left, during which we expect students to continue to make improvements and progress in their understanding and performance.





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We also expect to have Year 11 and Year 13 back in school and learning face-to-face, prior to the point where we need to make these decisions. What we are looking for, as always, is a positive willingness to engage with learning. If there are any issues – technology related or otherwise - to your son's or daughter's ability to access online lessons, please ensure you let us know as soon as possible so we can support to overcome any potential barriers.

I understand that students and their families want and need to have more definite information than this, and I share your frustration at the lack of clarity surrounding the parameters we have to work within.

We will continue to share more information and guidance with you as soon as we are able to. For the moment it is important that all students continue to study seriously. We have been pleased with the engagement and commitment shown by our students and I would like to thank all Parents and Carers for your support at the start of this term.

Kind regards,

Mrs Indira Warwick

Headteacher