

CLAVERHAM COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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Principal: Mr P. Swatton, B.Eng (Hons)

Date: 15.01.21

Ref: PAS/TLS/SEW

Dear Year 11 Students,

Firstly, I hope that you and your families are safe and well. I wish to thank each and every one of you for all of your hard work and for the maturity you have displayed during these challenging times; we are all extremely proud of the way in which you engaged with your online lessons during the first two weeks this term. I would also like to thank your families for the support they have provided for you and your teachers. Please remember that although there may still be difficulties ahead, the staff at the College are here to help you and your family. It is our pleasure to be able to support you through this time and I am sure that, by working together, we can find solutions to any problems we may encounter.

On Wednesday 6th January the Department for Education (DfE) made an announcement regarding GCSE examinations. The statement from the department provided some clarity about examinations, however, the procedures for how students will be assessed remains unclear for schools, parents and students at this point.

The full statement is available by clicking on the link below:

[Education Secretary outlines plans to support young people](#)

Summary of the key points:

- Although exams are the fairest way we have of assessing what a student knows, the impact of this pandemic now means that it is not possible to have these exams this year
- GCSEs exams will not go ahead this summer
- The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) will launch a 2-week consultation from 15th January – alongside the DfE – on the options for alternatives to the exams to ensure every young person gets a fair grade for their work
- A form of teacher-assessed grades, with training and support provided to schools will be used to ensure that grades are awarded fairly and consistently

Simon Lebus, Chief Regulator, on exams in 2021 has stated:

“We know that this is a difficult time for students, their parents and carers, teachers and trainers. Our message to students is this: please continue to engage as fully as you can in your education. That will be online for the majority of students, or face-to-face for those students still going into their school, college or training provider. This will put you in the best position, whatever arrangements are made for your qualifications”

When will I know more?

The College will now wait for DfE and Ofqual to finalise how you will be assessed following the consultation period. This is scheduled to be released on Friday the 15th January as mentioned in the points above. After this period of consultation there is likely to be a period of further investigation and decision making, at this stage we are still unclear as to when a concrete decision will be announced, but we are hopeful we will know by February half-term. Please be assured that the progress of our students is a key priority for us and we will keep you up-to-date about the process as we receive further information.

Vocational Examinations

Although we are awaiting confirmation of the arrangements for the awarding of grades for the summer exams, it has been confirmed that the examinations which were due to take place on 1st February, in Business Enterprise, have been cancelled. The DfE announced, earlier this week, that the BTEC exams scheduled to take place in February will not take place this year. This aligns with the decision taken on the GCSE exams earlier this month. I know our pupils have worked very hard towards this exam and I understand that they may be disappointed with this decision.

What should I do next?

In the words of Simon Lebus, Chief Regulator for Examinations (Ofqual):

“Year 11 students should continue to engage as fully as they can in their education.”

What is unclear at this stage is how students will be assessed from this point forward, and although examinations will not run in the summer as planned, we do not yet know the expectations or the evidence that may be required to complete a process of teacher assessment. My strong advice is to continue being positive and working hard during your online lessons and self-study.

As always, if you need any further guidance or support please contact your tutor or Head of House at the College, who will be able to help you with any concerns.

We would ask parents to please encourage sons/daughters to continue to:

- Attend all online lessons;
- Complete all work to the best of their ability;
- Meet deadlines;
- Seek support and advice from your teachers if you are unsure how to complete your work;
- If you are having any technical difficulties which is hindering your progress with online learning, please contact us asap: ictsupport@claverham.org

Due to our experience of centre assessed grades last year, it is really important to build up a clear portfolio of evidence for the process of issuing individual pupil subject centre assessed grades. All of the above will help to contribute to this evidence base.

I can promise you that Claverham, at all stages of the process, will discharge its duties conscientiously and with a huge sense of responsibility in order to ensure that the task entrusted to us by the DfE/Ofqual will be carried out fairly, consistently and with integrity. By working together as a team, we will no doubt navigate our way through these unprecedented and turbulent times. By supporting one another and endeavouring to do our best we will ensure that the best possible outcomes will prevail in August.

Take care of yourselves and stay safe,

Best wishes

Mr P. Swatton
Principal