

## Update to Year 11 Students and Parents

In the last two days there has been an exchange of letters between the Department for Education and OFQUAL regarding the impending consultation around Teacher Assessed Grades. The letters do give us an indication of what we might expect and is helping to inform our plans, but it would be wrong to publish anything concrete until after the consultation and the subsequent guidance has been issued to schools.

Having said this, I continue to be mindful of the anxieties that many students are feeling so felt it was appropriate to update you today with some brief detail from the letters and also about the mock exams planned later this half term.

The two points below offer a brief summary of content from the letters between the DfE and OFQUAL that are relevant to students:

- Schools should be asked to submit grades **as late as possible** in the summer term so that students have the chance to catch up on missed learning (this also provides the opportunity to demonstrate progress over a longer period of time).
- The consultation will consider whether it is right for schools to set and assess externally generated tests to ensure greater consistency between schools. It looks like the consultation will also ask whether this will be a requirement or optional for schools.

These are issues for us to deal with and not for students to worry about. The most important thing for all students to do now is engage with the remote learning and submit work when required.

**The mock exams scheduled for later this half term will not take place**, but they will be replaced with short assessments based upon the content and skills that have been delivered since September. These assessments will not be graded and will be 'open book' meaning that students can use previous work to help them during the assessments. These assessments are important as they will provide teachers with an insight into levels of engagement and understanding, but they are not the 'cliff edge' style tests associated with mock exams. We are planning further assessment windows over the coming months and will share these with you once full guidance is published by the DfE.

I know that some students and parents have been requesting predicted grades for post 16 providers, but as things stand it would not be appropriate to share this information. We are able to advise providers on a student's suitability for different level qualifications so please do get in touch with Mr Crowe or Mrs Winder if you would like further information or support. Many students have already had Connexions appointments and the team are now making contact with all other students to discuss possibilities next year.

The key message to students today is continue to do your very best in these challenging circumstances and try not to worry as we will do everything in our power to support you and help ensure that you are in no way disadvantaged by things outside of your control.

Best wishes and stay safe

Jonathan Heath (14.01.2021)