



Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parent,

**Re: Year 11 GCSE Grades – Next Steps**

Further to the national announcement yesterday evening of the cancellation of public examinations in May and June, I fully appreciate that both you and your child will be feeling a great degree of uncertainty at such a critical time in their studies. I would thus like to share with you some early information about how we plan to support our Year 11 pupils over the coming days, weeks and months.

Although public examinations have been cancelled, it is also clear that the Government will require pupils who were scheduled to take their GCSEs this academic year to still be awarded grades in August. These grades will, of course, be critical as students prepare for the next phase of their education and beyond.

Whilst the precise system that will be required of schools has not been disclosed to us at the time of writing, Huddersfield Grammar School is basing its early response on the approach that examination boards has taken to emergency circumstances that have affected individuals or groups of pupils in previous years.

This process entails the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) recommending the use of a range of teacher assessments that would be externally moderated and/or triangulated alongside existing data on the GCSE performance of the school in previous years.

If we are to be required to submit teacher assessments as a means of determining final grades, then we will need to provide evidence of the robustness of our data. There may well also be an expectation that examinations will be taken by Year 11 pupils in some fashion, albeit remotely, as is now happening at a number of universities in this country.

To that end, it is crucial that our Year 11 pupils maintain a ‘business as usual’ approach to their studies at this time and this is the message that I shared with the cohort this morning. There are still courses that need to be completed and revision for teacher-set assessments will need to take place to further build up our body of evidence.

Our Year 11 cohort was, of course, only a matter of weeks away for the commencement of Study Leave, when they were to focus their intentions largely on revising independently from home. You can be reassured that our programme of remote and then online learning, which will be shared with parents later today, will take heed of what is required for the Year 11 cohort at this time.



Upon arriving at school this morning, it was clear that many of our Year 11 pupils were shocked and demoralised by the decision that was announced by the Government yesterday evening. They have been working hard and preparing diligently for many months - and will need the support of both the school and their parents in managing this changed landscape that now faces them. As a school, we owe it to them to maintain as much normality as possible.

The nation was assured by Prime Minister that the progress of Year 11 pupils across the country would *“not be impeded as a result of this decision”* and that further advice and guidance would be available by tomorrow (Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March). Please do be reassured that we will update you with our own response at each stage of this process.

With warmest wishes,



Mr M Seaton

**Headmaster**

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