

11/11/2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope this email finds you well. As you know, the mock exams are not far off now and your son/daughter will have already started to undertake active revision strategies to prepare.

I wanted to email you to let you know of some changes to GCSEs and what will happen if GCSEs do not happen in the summer of 2022. The full information about this can be found at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-letters-arrangements-for-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2022/letter-to-students>

However, I hope to summarise some key points for you here.

**Changes to the exams:**

- students taking GCSEs in English literature, history, ancient history and geography will not need to cover the usual range of content in the exams
- students taking GCSEs in all other subjects will be given advance information about the focus of the content of the exams to help them focus their revision
- students taking GCSEs in mathematics will be given in their exams copies of formulae they would in other years have to memorise
- students taking GCSE physics and combined science will be given in their exams a sheet covering all the equations they might need to apply in the exams

Information about the details of these changes should be available from the DfE and exam boards by 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

**What if there are no exams?**

If this happens then grades will be determined by teachers as in the past two years (TAGs – Teacher Assessed Grades). These will be based upon three sets of assessments:

- Mock Exams – Autumn Term
  - Spring Term exams
  - Summer Term Exams
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- Students cannot be assessed on work that they have not studied.
  - Work will be 'blind-marked' and standardised. (Blind marked means that the teacher will not know whose work they are marking to avoid any unconscious bias).
  - Students will be told when the exam periods are so they know that the results will form the basis of their TAGs.
  - The school has to retain the students' papers

### **Assembly for Year 11:**

We will go through this information with our Year 11s in an assembly next week.

### **Should I be worried about anything?**

Only if your son/daughter isn't doing lots of home learning! All our students in Year 11 should be doing around 2 – 3 hours of work each evening to consolidate their learning and to conduct active revision. We will be reminding them of these active revision techniques in the assembly mentioned above.

We take a pragmatic view. We hope and feel strongly that it is most likely that examinations *will* take place this summer and that teaching our students content, skills and knowledge is more important than constantly assessing them and we will be aiming to get this balance right. Hopefully by March/April we will have a much better sense of how likely it is that exams will go ahead.

In the meantime, keep supporting your son/daughter to work hard and achieve to the best of their ability with their home learning.

Kind regards

Mr Steven Haycocks

**HEADTEACHER**  
**BALSHAW'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL**