



12 January 2021

Dear Parent / Carer

GCSE Examinations

As we enter the first full week of remote learning after the announcement from the Secretary of State for Education that this summer's examinations will not go ahead as originally planned, I am delighted that attendance at online learning sessions is above 95%. While Guiseley students continue to demonstrate an exceedingly high level of engagement, and we have had lots of positive feedback from parents and carers, for which we are truly grateful, it is frustrating that the national picture around examinations remains unclear.

In his statement the Secretary of State:

- Confirmed that GCSEs and A and AS Level exams will not go ahead this summer;
- Stated that the Department for Education and Ofqual had already worked up a range of contingency options;
- Clarified that the details would need to be 'fine-tuned' in consultation with Ofqual, the exam boards and teaching representatives; and
- Stated that 'a form of teacher-assessed grades, with training and support provided to ensure these are awarded fairly and consistently' would be used to award grades this year.

I have delayed writing to you in the hope that some further details would be forthcoming but it has become clear that we will need to wait for this information. There is currently no further information regarding what form the teacher-assessed grades will take, or what evidence we may be asked to provide or base our judgements upon. We do not know what period of time we will be assessing for or whether some of our planned pre-public examinations or assessment will form part of this teacher assessment.

Any speculation in the press or on social media about what that may look like is exactly that – it is speculation and should not determine the effort students put into their studies. The consultation with exam boards on what the process will look like is still ongoing.

Ofqual have made the following statement which we fully endorse and encourage all students and parents to bear in mind: *"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,*

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or face-to-face for those students still going in to their school, college or training provider. This will put you in the best position, whatever arrangements are made for your qualifications."

We are in the favourable position where our 'early' pre-public examinations for Year 11 mean we have completed this particular assessment. **It is crucial that Year 11 students are aware that this is highly unlikely to be the only assessment opportunity and they should neither rely on strong pre-public exam results nor be discouraged by disappointing ones.**

As the position changes and more becomes known, we will continue to keep you updated and will ensure that our assessment plans for all exam year groups are in line with Ofqual requirements once they are confirmed. In the meantime, there are still many months of education left. We want to place students in the very best position possible through continued teaching of the curriculum and provision of practice opportunities, so they achieve grades which accurately reflect their understanding of the courses they study and the hard work they have put into their studies.

Year 11 Parents Evening

It is essential that the Year 11 Parents Evening goes ahead. We will be delaying this by one week. It will now take place on 2 February rather than as planned on 26 January. This will give us the additional time we will need to organise our online Parents Evening system. We will write to you in the week commencing 18 January to explain how this process will work and how appointments can be booked.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Clayton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Paul Clayton
Headteacher