



'We value the power of education to change lives.'

27th March 2020

Dear Students and Parents/Carers,

RE: Update for Year 11 and Year 13

Thank you for your commitment to continue studying following the announcement that GCSE and A Level exams will not be held this summer and alternative methods will be developed to award final grades to students. As yet, all we know in school about this is what we have already passed on to you – that teacher assessment will replace the missing GCSE and A Level exams. We have been informed that Ofqual and the DfE will make further announcements '[next week](#)' (see link).

Hopefully, after this we will have a clearer idea of what evidence base the exam boards will allow teachers to use and over which time period from these two-year courses. In addition, we will hopefully have a clearer idea of the implications for students on BTEC and Cambridge Technical courses which do not have end-of-course summer exams. It is likely that exam boards will ask teachers to use a variety of evidence to recommend a grade for their students including 'prior attainment' (the standard of work earlier in the course), and 'current attainment' (the standard of work produced more recently). Teachers will use a range of evidence including actual student work and tracking data to do this. Teacher-assessed grades will be carefully moderated at school level. They are likely to be moderated at national level, with the distribution of grades managed by the boards so that proportions of students achieving each grades across the country in 2020 is consistent with proportions in recent years.

We have built a solid evidence base of 'current attainment' for our students in recent weeks. **All Year 13 and Year 11 students need to finish and upload the work set them this week and upload any other pieces of work they feel may help teachers build their evidence base, by Friday 3rd April.** This includes submitting any remaining A Level or GCSE actual coursework, and BTEC assignments, from any Year 13s and Year 11s, in anticipation of the opportunity to use these last assignments towards the teacher-assessed grade. **This includes our Art-based courses**, where the entire final grade would normally depend on controlled exams sat early in the summer: **at the moment we recommend strongly that our Art-based students continue to do their work at home after Friday 3rd April too**, as though preparing for the summer exams, until we have clarity from the exam boards about how to award grades for the Art-based courses.

To facilitate this approach, from Monday 30th March inclusive no new individual pieces of work for Year 13 and Year 11 students will be set, nor for Year 12 and 13 students who would have been sitting GCSE re-sit exams or Core Maths exams this summer, or the very small number taking AS Levels this summer.

However, students must retain their books and folders, plus all their revision notes, for use in the event the Ofqual process permits the submission of any additional work in support of our teacher assessments; or to support their learning for any replacement exams they choose to take as part of the appeal against the grade awarded this summer, when schools re-open. Please be assured our teachers will be fair, rigorous and consistent in their application of whatever criteria or evidence base we are asked by Ofqual to use, with a view to awarding the most accurate *and* supportive alternative grade possible.

Thank you once again for your support, cooperation and patience in this challenging situation – all of us here at Highcliffe School really appreciate it.

Yours faithfully



Patrick Earnshaw
Headteacher