

23rd March 2020

Dear Year 11 Students and Parents/Carers

Cancellation of GCSE Examinations, Awarding of Grades

I write to convey communications received from the government regarding the cancellation of GCSE examinations, along with messages from Richard Huish and Bridgwater & Taunton College.

Message from the Department for Education & Awarding Bodies

Following the decision to close schools and not go ahead with this summer's exams, the government has announced more details of how grades will be awarded this summer. Here are the main points:

- Regulators will develop and set out a process that will provide a calculated grade to each student which reflects their performance as fairly as possible.*
- Exam boards will be asking teachers, who know their students well, to submit their judgement about the grade that they believe the student would have received if exams had gone ahead.*
- To produce this, teachers will be asked to take into account a range of evidence and data including performance on mock exams and non-exam assessment. Clear guidance on how to do this fairly and robustly will be provided to schools and colleges soon.*
- Exam boards will then combine this information with other relevant data, including prior attainment, and use this information to produce a calculated grade for each student, which will be a best assessment of the work they have put in.*
- The aim is to provide these calculated grades to students before the end of July.*
- These grades will be indistinguishable from those provided in other years.*
- We'll also aim to ensure that the distribution of grades follows a similar pattern to that in other years, so that this year's students aren't disadvantaged.*
- Students will be able to appeal their grades if they don't believe the right process has been followed.*
- There will also be an option to sit exams early in the next academic year for any students who wish to – and students can also choose to sit exams next summer.*

CARE

ASPIRATION

RESPECT

DETERMINATION

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Message from Bridgwater & Taunton College

Following the governments update on the evening of 18 March, scheduled GCSE exams for May and June will not be going ahead as planned. Therefore, those people who already have a conditional offer will have their offer updated to unconditional. For those who are due to be interviewed, please don't worry, our teams will contact you by phone for a conversation about the course and your predicted grades. You will be offered a place at the College for September.

We are looking forward to the College returning to normal and seeing you in September. If you have an offer, please take a look at our enrichment pages and sign up for one of our academies due to start in September as usual. In the meantime, we will continue to keep you updated. Rest assured, you will have a place at College and we are already planning how we will ensure the start of term is as smooth as possible!

GCSEs have been cancelled. Can I still get a place in College?

Yes, you will get a place at College. We will be offering you an unconditional place at College based on your interview and predicted grades.

Will this impact the application process for future students?

This won't impact our application process for future students: interviews will take place by phone and you should apply in the normal way. Any potential student who can't participate in an interview because of illness can have their interview rearranged.

Message from Richard Huish College

Following the UK Governments decision to close all Schools and Colleges from Friday 20th March 2020 the GCSE exams scheduled to take place in May and June will not be going ahead as planned. Regardless of what happens, if you have already applied to join us your place is secured and we look forward to seeing you in September. If you are yet to apply, online applications are still open and we will phone you with your offer. We will continue to provide information and details as soon as it is available across all of our social media and our website. We want to reassure you we will do everything possible to make sure this does not change your plans for your future.

Message from Kingsmead School

I hope this information will answer some of your questions – but I appreciate that you may still have some, as do we. When more information is provided, we will share this with you. Miss Burridge, Head of Year, will soon share a Firefly page with all Year 11 students upon which they can ask any questions about this topic.

Your Prom will take place at a future date which is yet to be determined. We know this is an important event to mark your time at Kingsmead, and we look forward to celebrating your many successes with you.

You should **continue to complete your Firefly tasks at home** until further notice. Whether you take your GCSEs in the next academic year or not, learning *must* continue to both prepare you for the demands of your Post-16 courses and to ensure you maintain the good study habits necessary for success at college. Staff are yet to submit your predicted grades to the government. They may ask you to continue to upload work to Firefly/OneDrive in order to help them accurately gauge your predicted grades.

Please do not hesitate to contact Kingsmead School if we can support your college transition, wellbeing or learning in this tense and uncertain time. We remain *your* secondary school whether you are in attendance or accessing work remotely from home.

Yours faithfully,



Charlie Pierce

Deputy Headteacher