

Dear Year 11 students and parents

As you know, the government has made an announcement about changes they are making to the exams in response to the loss of learning due to COVID 19. These are in addition to the previous announcement that exams will be pushed back three weeks and changes to GCSE English literature and GCSE history which your child's teachers will have explained to them.

The new changes are:

- more generous grading, in line with the grades achieved in 2020. These will be averaged across subjects so that candidates are not disadvantaged by subject choice.
- exam aids in some subjects, for example some formulae.
- advanced notice of exam content in some subjects, details of which will be confirmed by the end of January.

We know that these measures alone will not mitigate the impact of covid on our students. As I write, there has been no self-isolation required of our Year 11 students but there is of course, no guarantee that this will not happen in the future. Headteacher organisations are still lobbying for further changes that take account of the impact of Covid on our students.

The government has also made plans for students who may not be able to sit exams for Covid-related reasons. These are:

- Extended use of special considerations if a student is able to sit some, but not all, of their papers in a subject.
- Contingency exams running ten days after the end of the main summer series which will be condensed and reduced papers for each subject.
- As a very last resort for students who miss all exams because of Covid, a 'validated teacher assessment' will be accepted. There are no details yet of what this would entail, and what evidence schools would need to provide.
- Clinically extremely vulnerable students who have been told to continue shielding in the summer may sit their exams under invigilated conditions in their own homes.

This is all the information I have at this point and I know that subject teachers will be giving their classes any information from the subject specific exam boards.

I hope this is helpful. Our Year 11s have been absolutely superb since returning in September and I want to congratulate them on their resilience and commitment. It is very challenging at the moment in school and I am very aware that many students are extremely anxious, as are staff. We will continue to do everything possible to support your children and help them through these difficult times. If there is anything you think we should be doing that we are not, please do contact the school.

As this is my last letter to you, I would also like to thank you for your support and just say how much I have enjoyed working with and for your families. I wish all our Year 11s good luck for the exams and beyond. I have been rather overwhelmed by the very many kind and generous words and gifts.

Very best wishes
Mrs Watson