



Whitburn Church of England Academy

An Academy with Specialist Status in Maths and Computing

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Advice for Year 11 Examination Candidates – Summer 2020

Dear Year 11 Student

We have received some clarification from Ofqual about the awarding of grades this summer; I know many of you have been waiting anxiously for this guidance. The Academy is reviewing this information but please be reassured Ofqual have publicly stated that:

'We want to reassure students waiting for news that we are doing everything we can to make sure they are not disadvantaged by these unprecedented circumstances.'

Staff in schools and colleges are being asked the question, ‘What grade would this particular student most plausibly have achieved if they were taking the exam?’ Ofqual have said:

'For this summer's awards, schools and colleges are being asked to provide centre assessment grades for their students. These should be fair, objective and carefully considered judgements of the grades schools and colleges believe their students would have been most likely to achieve if they had sat their exams and should take into account the full range of available evidence.'

To determine this, staff are being asked to take into account the evidence available to them including a range of things like your classwork and homework, your results in assignments and any mock exams, any non-exam assessment or coursework you might have done and your general progress during your course. If you are worried about a disappointing mock examination grade, remember a holistic view of your performance will be considered.

Further information can be found by visiting the Ofqual website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/further-update-on-2020-exams>

Vocational Qualifications – Update

The guidance regarding vocational qualifications is slightly delayed when compared to GCSE and A Level due to the number of awarding bodies and types of assessment. Ofqual has said:

'It is my intention that students enrolled on these qualifications are not disadvantaged with respect to their peers in the same cohort taking GCSEs, AS and A levels'

PTO

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Can I do anything now?

Unfortunately, there is little you can do now in the circumstances. You must trust the professional judgement of your teachers. We have a lot of experience in teaching and assessing at GCSE and we are confident we can award grades that reflect your likely outcomes.

Please do not contact staff.

Your teachers are unable to enter into any discussion about your grades and it will be the exam boards who award your final grade not the Academy. Ofqual states:

'the final grade you get could be different from the one your school or college sends to the exam board.'

When will my grades be issued?

Ofqual has stated that they aim to issue grades at the normal time, this being Thursday 20th August 2020. If there are any changes to this we will notify you via the Academy website.

EAR service (appeals)

The process for appeals has not been confirmed. However, Ofqual has stated:

'Under the circumstances, the normal arrangements for reviews of marking and appeals will not apply. We are considering what arrangements might be put in place to allow an effective appeal and will consult on proposals shortly.'

'Students who feel that their grades from the summer do not reflect their ability will have the opportunity to take their exams in the autumn series or in summer 2021. If they choose to do this, both grades will stand.'

Read Ofqual's full letter to students here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/877830/Letter_to_students_-_Summer_2020_grading.pdf

See Ofqual's video for students here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VXuDOrtJY1Q>

The Prom

We of course will continue to monitor the situation with regards to the Prom. However as all bars, restaurants and hotels continue to be closed under the lockdown regulations, the likelihood of the Prom occurring on the arranged date is extremely unlikely. We will have a Prom, I will make sure of that, we will just have to wait for our venue to reopen again and consider what options are given to us.

Sixth Form Admissions

Our Sixth Form admission process will continue as usual, using the grades awarded on 20th August. However, the Academy will be mindful of the unique circumstances we find ourselves in.

What to do in the coming weeks:

If you are planning to progress to study at Whitburn Sixth Form or another institution, I would recommend completing the bridging work that is available through the Academy website and Microsoft Teams.

Yours faithfully



J E Crowe
Principal