

7th April 2020

Dear students and parents,

I am writing to you following the information released by the Department for Education to explain how we have been asked to participate in the awarding of grades. I would also like to take this opportunity to reassure students and parents and to thank you for all your support and hard work throughout the year and through the very difficult times we have shared recently.

Below is a summary of how grades will be awarded. Further detail is also available on the school website for those students and parents who would find this useful.

1. Departments will work together, with the guidance of the senior leadership team, to estimate the grade most likely achieved by students if they had sat the exam in the summer term and completed any non-examined assessment. The letter on the website from the government to students and parents contains a lot of useful information and is very clear.
2. Once uploaded to the exam board grades will be decided upon based on about the same percentage of students nationally getting each grade as in previous years – this is the established methodology for the reformed GCSEs.
3. Grades will be awarded no later than their usual award date and possibly earlier. Appeals will likely be severely limited in nature but students who are not happy with their grade will be able to re-take their exams.
4. Entry into sixth form courses for HWS students will be based on the grades to be awarded by exam boards. All students (internal and external) who enrol in the sixth form will be on trial for the first six weeks to ascertain their suitability for their chosen subjects.

I would like to thank all our year 11 students for their amazing hard work this year and I would like to thank our year 11 parents also for their hard work and support also, and of course our wonderful staff. We are disappointed that our students were not able to show the outcomes of their hard work in the GCSE exams and I know that, despite the stresses, many students feel the same. We are also disappointed that the end of year celebration events have been severely limited as the last official day of school had many year 11 students absent due to self-isolation or illness. I would like to reassure students and parents that we will endeavour to find some way of providing the end of year 11 celebration events in some form. How this happens and when this

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5-minute showers



Drive less



Lights off



Local produce



Recycle



Meat-free meals



Zero-waste fashion



Unplug



Refill and reuse



Bring your own bag

happens, we currently have no idea because we will have to wait for the government to decide when social distancing can be reduced.

Year 11 work that contributes to the estimation of grades this summer has now been discontinued and there is no expectation of continuing with tasks for this purpose. We believe that maintaining study is a vital process to bridge the gap between now and the start of courses in September. Therefore, we will continue to give year 11 students work online should they wish to complete it. Ms Pinnick will provide more information about this after the Easter holidays. Also of course, some students will wish to resit exams next term and so might need to continue studies for this reason.

Finally, I would like to wish all of our students, parents and staff and your families and friends all the best at this very difficult time. Please continue to stay safe, follow government advice, keep in touch and support each other. I look forward to seeing most of you next year and I wish you all the very best!

Yours faithfully,

A Hartley
Assistant Headteacher