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Message regarding exam cancellation for Year 11 students

Dear Parents/Carers and Students,

You will be aware that the government have decided to cancel Year 11 exams this year. They have produced some guidance on this which can be accessed on the link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-cancellation-of-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2020/coronavirus-covid-19-cancellation-of-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2020>

In short, the government has decided that students will be awarded grades based on 'moderated teacher assessment'. This means that they will use teachers' predictions of grades that students were likely to achieve, alongside other information, such as students' performance in non-exam assessments and prior attainment. The government has also said that it is likely that the past performance of students at individual schools will be considered to calculate grades.

Students should feel reassured that grades will be awarded using as fair a system as possible, and will have an opportunity to sit exams if they choose to when schools reopen:

We (the government) will work closely with Ofqual and awarding organisations to ensure candidates are awarded a fair grade that recognises the work they have put in. If a student does not believe the correct process has been followed in their case they will be able to appeal on that basis. In addition, if they do not feel their calculated grade reflects their performance, they will have the opportunity to sit an exam, as soon as is reasonably possible after schools and colleges open again. Students will also have the option to sit their exams in summer 2021.

Some students may be concerned about what this means for their next step from Parkside to a school Sixth Form, college, apprenticeship or employment. I would like to assure students that the system will be flexible to support them to progress appropriately, and that Parkside will support them every step of the way.

We have advised students to carry on completing work so that they are fully prepared if they choose to take an exam when schools reopen. Continuation of study also consolidates the knowledge they have been taught which will be useful in the future, especially for those subjects they wish to study, and maintains good habits of learning and self-discipline.

Students progressing to A Level and other Level 3 courses may benefit significantly from using the time between now and the formal commencement of their Post-16 studies to pre-learn areas of specifications they will study Post-16. Whilst there is no further official guidance available at this time, I appreciate that you may wish to talk this through in order to understand the situation fully, or for advice specific to your situation. If any students or parents would like to discuss things with me over the phone, please contact school and we will be in touch.

I will be in touch with further information regarding examination grades for our Year 11 students as it becomes available.

Take care and best wishes

Ben Riggott