

St Joseph's Catholic Academy

A Leading Edge Technology & Applied Learning College
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Headteacher: Mr P Mitchell
Chair of Directors: Mrs G Kilgour

8th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Update on GCSE and A level examinations

On Wednesday the government announced that GCSE and A level exams will not go ahead in the summer and instead a form of centre assessed grades will be used. The exact wording used was as follows:

“Another area where we have learned lessons is on exams. Last year, all four nations of the UK found their arrangements for awarding grades did not deliver what they needed, with the impact felt painfully by students and their parents. Although exams are the fairest way we have of assessing what a student knows, the impact of this pandemic now means that it is not possible to have these exams this year. I can confirm that GCSEs and A and AS Level exams will not go ahead this summer. This year we are going to put our trust in teachers rather than algorithms.

The department and Ofqual had already worked up a range of contingency options. While the details will need to be fine-tuned in consultation with Ofqual, the exam boards and teaching representatives, I can confirm now that I wish to use a form of teacher-assessed grades, with training and support provided to ensure these are awarded fairly and consistently.”

Unfortunately, we currently have no further details and keenly await further information from Ofqual.

During this period of remote learning, I would like to highlight the following:

1. At this stage of Year 11 and 13, all subjects still have new content to be covered. We will continue to do this as it is important that our students complete their courses as the knowledge and skills will be vital for their next stage of education or training.
2. Until we hear more details about the information that schools will need to use and provide, we have to assume that evidence from previous, current and future work will be used. It is therefore vital that students continue to complete all work set to their best of their ability.
3. The Mock examination week scheduled for 18 January 2021 will not take place as planned. We are currently designing a strategy to assess learning remotely and will be in touch with further information following the standardisation and moderation of our assessment processes at Trust level.

Parents/Carers: Stay Alert. Keep your child at home if they have Covid-19 symptoms. Stay Safe.

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We know this is an unsettling and upsetting time for our students, we are committed to supporting them and I will update you when any further details come to light.

Many thanks for your continued support.

Kind regards,

Headteacher

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