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Dear UKAT Students, Parents and Carers,

Update RE: GCSE and Post 16 Qualifications – Summer 2020

I hope that you are all well. I am sure many of you may still be anxious and concerned with regard to the government's decision to cancel all public exams this year. I am now pleased to be able to give you an update that we received at the end of last week from Ofqual – the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation in England regarding how students will be awarded their grades this year.

Please click the link at the bottom of this letter to see the Ofqual letter to students. Please note this guidance does not apply to BTEC qualifications – we await further information regarding the award of vocational qualifications.

I summarise below the key points:

- Schools and Academies will be required to make predicted grade recommendations for each subject that a student takes and submit this to the relevant exam board.
- These grade recommendations should be based on a range of evidence. Grading judgements should be based on work done before schools and academies shut down and, as such, teachers will no longer set new work for students after the Easter holidays for the purpose of determining the predicted grade.
- Teachers are encouraged to make judgements based on a range of evidence NOT simply report the result of mock exams. Evidence could include coursework, homework's, interim tests and assessments, work in text books, presentations etc. Which of these sources to use, or not use, is a decision for education professionals. For transparency we will write to you once a final decision has been made regarding the evidence we will consider in making our grade recommendations to the exam boards.
- Schools will be able to submit predicted grades to the examination boards from 29th May 2020. It is not yet clear when the exam boards will release the grades, but it is intended that this will be by mid August 2020 – which is the usual annual date - allowing students, schools, academies and Universities time to make decisions, regarding student's next progression route.

- We have been instructed that under no circumstances will students, parents or carers be informed of grades before this date.

How will exam boards ensure fairness?

Schools and academies will need to ensure they have a robust system for quality assuring the grades they submit to the exam boards for each student, and that they can clearly evidence why a student has been awarded a certain grade.

If exam boards find that an academy or school has deviated too much from the examination boards expectations by over estimating, or underestimating grades for the school as a whole, they will adjust the grades accordingly. Part of this assurance process will involve exam boards considering the prior attainment of students – this means that for students in Year 11 they will look back at their key stage 2 primary SATs results, and for Year 13 students - their GCSE results.

Students who feel that a grade awarded is not reflective of their ability, may well be able to take the examinations in Autumn 2020, or Summer 2021. Ofqual is still to make a final decision regarding this matter.

It is also proposed that examination boards should not issue GCSE grades to any Year 10 students, but a final decision has still not yet been made. This will affect students taking Statistics at Chatham Grammar, and English Literature at Brompton Academy.

We will write to you again once we have further information.

I would also like to suggest that Year 11 and 13 students use the time ahead wisely, and consider embarking on some self-motivated learning – perhaps researching topics, themes, subjects and areas which they wish to pursue in the future – either at sixth form level, at University or in the workplace.

Best wishes to you and your families

Philip Storey
Joint Executive Principal
UKAT

Link to student letter from Ofqual:

<http://bit.ly/lettertostudents2020>