



King Arthur's School

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Head of School – Mrs J Jacklin

24th April 2020

Dear Students, Parents and Carers,

I write to update you on the latest information we have received from the government and also to provide clarity about the next steps for our year 11 students. As ever at this difficult time, I hope this finds you and your family well.

GCSE results

I am sure that these already very challenging times have been made even more worrying for you because of the uncertainty surrounding how GCSE grades will be awarded. We have now received very clear guidance from Ofqual (the government agency for examinations) on what is expected of us as a school. The full guidance is available through this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/awarding-qualifications-in-summer-2020>

Over the course of the next few weeks our SLT will be working closely with Curriculum Team Leaders and teachers to produce the data that has been requested by exam boards. We are now clear that, this will involve producing a rank order of students within each examination subject. The rank order can vary from subject to subject reflecting each student's ability within different areas. Alongside the rank order, the school will then assign centre assessment grades for each subject for each student, submitting them to the relevant exam boards as requested. We will not be asked to submit any grades before 29th May 2020.

I would remind you that we are not permitted to discuss the rank order or centre assessment grades with students or parents at any point in the process. Please **do not** attempt to contact any member of staff with any query about this issue. If you would like to discuss the process please contact me directly.

From the information published by the government, we understand that the results will be moderated against national expectations by the exam boards and used to generate the final GCSE results that will be released to students on August 20th 2020. Students who are not happy with their awarded grades will be offered the opportunity to sit examinations in September. A process for appeals is still being finalised, following consultation by Ofqual, but it seems likely that the only grounds for appeal would be on the procedures used for ranking students within a school.

On-line working

Since the GCSE results guidance makes it clear that students who are not able to complete online work after 20th March should not be disadvantaged in the ranking process, we have taken the decision not to require Y11 students to complete online work that is linked to their GCSE subjects from this point forward. I can confirm this means that



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you will not need to complete work for the Art GCSE portfolio, if this is a subject you studied. You will need to retain the work completed to date and we will notify you about returning this when the school is open in a more normal fashion.

We would advise that your child does carry on working to prepare for their next steps. Please do use the resources we provided at the start of April and also make use of the support of our Careers provision. Please contact Hayley.andrews@kingarthurs.org.uk if you would like your child to have further contact from our careers provider.

In the last day, we have also been advised of the offers available from our local colleges and sixth forms. At the end of this letter, you will find information from some of the post 16 routes to which our young people progress and have applied. Please do use their resources to help prepare for the next level of study. They appear to be comprehensive and information will be emailed to individual students who have the offer of a place with whichever provider. If your post 16 provider is not in the list, please do check their website for further information. Where we hear more in the coming days, we will post further information for our year 11s on our website.

We really do encourage you to engage with these online resources, since it will maintain your momentum in learning and provide really strong foundations for your post 16 study.

BTEC and other vocational courses

Consultation is taking place on the best way to award grades for vocational courses. This will close on 8th May and further information will follow. It seems there is tension for vocational awards that are linked to occupational and professional competence e.g. Motor Vehicle vocational awards require you to demonstrate an oil change, which cannot be assumed as achieved without being witnessed by an assessor. Fortunately, for our qualifications, any practical assessment is about enabling students to progress to a further qualification and from the information published to date, may well be treated differently and calculated grades awarded as a result. For some of our vocational awards, the practical element has already been assessed and moderated, which means we have the information we will need to add into any calculated result for that subject.

As there is a plethora of information available from each exam board (we use 3 different boards for our vocational awards), I have attempted to summarise the information you need to know below.

For qualifications used for progression to further education (post 16 study), the exam boards have responded to initial announcements from Ofqual (exam regulatory body) and stated the following:

“Where possible, learners should receive calculated results for these qualifications. Calculated results may be based on the outcomes of any completed assignments or modules, and/or centre judgements (for the whole qualification, or for uncompleted modules or units) of the result each learner would most likely have achieved had they been able to complete their assessments in summer 2020.”

It does appear that each individual exam board is considering how their specific and very individual vocational qualifications will need to be assessed to award grades, where this is possible. Once the consultation on awarding vocational qualifications finishes on 8th May 2020, I hope we will have clarity on exactly how the final grades will be calculated for each course, across each exam board.

Alongside the information about awarding grades, we have also been made aware in the recent announcements that students will no longer need to complete work at home for submission. As published by Pearson, who offer all BTEC qualifications, the statement explains:



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“Where we expect to be able to use estimation, we do not require or expect any assessment for BTEC to take place while learners are studying at home. Ofqual has also confirmed there is no expectation that new work should be completed to support any estimation process. We therefore expect to collect estimated grades from teachers and tutors for any incomplete work, for Yr 10 through to Yr 13 and these estimates will be used in the calculation of a final grade where relevant.”

“However we are continuing to support schools and colleges to enable learners to continue with their studies from home. We are encouraging continued learning so when learners return to school or college they have the knowledge and skills they need to continue with their course. We also support the benefits that learning and a structured day have on general health and wellbeing and we want to make sure that we are doing everything we can to best support you and your learners at this time.”

As you can see, the exam boards are also keen for students to build their skills and knowledge for their future study at post 16 and offered the same guidance about continuing learning that prepares for the next steps.

The same information about no further work being completed by students has been confirmed across the 3 exam boards we use for Hospitality and Catering, iMedia and BTEC Sport. **To confirm, no further work needs to be completed by students.** Once information is received about how we will award grades, we will use all existing data to make this professional judgement for vocational awards, in a similar method as outlined for GCSEs earlier in this letter.

It is imperative that all work is retained and we will be asking for all coursework for both GCSE and vocational awards to be returned to us, once we are open in a normal fashion again. I will write to inform you of the process for returning work, once I am able to confirm.

Should you wish to find out more about the consultation on the award of vocational grades this summer, please use the link below to see all the available information. You can also take part in the consultation and a further link is available through the link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/exceptional-arrangements-for-assessment-and-grading-in-2020>

Post 16 Providers - information about preparatory work

For those of you moving on to The Gryphon School for your sixth form studies, please see the link to information about their online offer at present. They are keen that you have all the resources you need to get ahead for your studies with them.

<https://www.gryphon.dorset.sch.uk/news/message-to-students-joining-sixth-form-this-september/#.XqclXyXTXDs>

<https://www.gryphon.dorset.sch.uk/sixth-form/transition/>

Where you are going on to study at Strode College, please see the latest information on their website.

For all our Year 11s who are moving on to study at Yeovil College, please find the information they have sent us today. It looks like they are ready for you all to get started!



“Yeovil College are officially ready to launch our preparation work for your Year 11 students – with YC Edge Get Ahead!

We have been using this time period to help our incoming Year 11s to get ahead with their college studies, so that when they reach us they will be off to a head start. We have taken a significant amount of time over this because we do not want to simply share government, and other, generic resources. We wanted to ensure we got this right so that it will really benefit your students. Each of our workbooks and work plans are bespoke and written uniquely for each curriculum area. Taking the time to complete such task will give our incoming students the Yeovil Edge!

From Friday 1st May students will receive an email with a link for them to use our Moodle page, this is where they will be able to access the work in each curriculum area. Full instructions will be issued to students on Friday morning and they are receiving an email today to update them of this fantastic opportunity. I will also send out a further email to yourselves with the instructions included, should you need to support your students with accessing the work.

We have also spent time updating our Coronavirus Hub on our website - <https://www.yeovil.ac.uk/coronavirus-hub/>. This page contains an area designed for Year 11 School Leavers, it is packed with resources, guides, information on applying and even a newsletter designed specifically for Year 11 Students. Within our hub your staff and students can also access the health and wellbeing toolkit we have created for our own staff and students.”

Whilst I appreciate this letter has a huge amount of information for you to read and absorb, I hope that you will find it useful to clarify a difficult situation. As we receive and interpret the information the government and Ofqual send, we will share it with you as appropriate.

As always, if you have any questions or require any further assistance, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me through jen.jacklin@kingarthurs.org.uk .

I send my very best wishes to you all at this time.

Yours faithfully,



Jen Jacklin
Head of School



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