

7<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

As you are aware, GCSE and A Level examinations will not be going ahead this summer. The Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson made a statement in the House of Commons yesterday indicating that teachers' estimated grades will be used to replace cancelled GCSEs and A-levels in England this summer. He has also stated that the exams watchdog Ofqual will draw up proposals for an alternative way of deciding results for qualifications that could be used for jobs, staying on in school or university places. This would be done without any exam papers or standardised mock exams. The use of teachers' assessments, with some process of moderation, will be used for this summer's candidates. We are still awaiting further guidance on this moderation process.

An Ofqual spokeswoman said they would consider options for replacement exam results, both academic and vocational. This is to ensure the fairest possible outcome in the circumstances. Ofqual are discussing alternative arrangements with the Department for Education as they know that many are seeking clarity as soon as possible.

*Message from Simon Lebus's, Interim Chief Regulator, Ofqual:*

*We understand that this is a difficult time for students, their parents and carers, and teachers. Our message to students is that they should continue to engage as fully as they can in their education. That will be online for the majority of students, or face-to-face for those students still coming in to school. This will put the students in the best position, whatever arrangements are made for their qualifications. It is important that teachers and students can focus on the knowledge and skills needed to equip students to progress to the next stage, whatever form that might take – whether to college, an apprenticeship, university or employment.*

At Copleston, we expect all students in Year 11 and Year 13 to engage with the online learning that we will be delivering via Microsoft Teams. This will form a crucial part of this stage in their education and will enable them to access their future career paths post 16 or post 18 confidently and successfully. Students' engagement with online lessons and the submission of work connected to these lessons could not be more important. The teachers will be continuously assessing student engagement with the learning to measure the progress they are making over the coming months. Completion of tasks set as part of the online learning will enable teachers form an accurate judgement of the students' performance. Students should also be working towards completing all aspects of coursework in subjects that have the coursework element. All of this will form a key part of the teacher assessment that will be used to award students' final grades in the summer.

Copleston will continue to offer support to our students throughout this period. For example, we will continue to deliver the Exam Skills Programme and Online Tutoring for Year 11 students. However, the NEA 2 cooking examinations in Food Tech for Year 11 have now been cancelled.

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment

At the moment, we are still awaiting information on the final plans from Ofqual and will update you as soon as we receive the guidance. Teachers will not be able to discuss the awarding of grades in their subjects with students or parents. If you have any specific queries, please direct these to Mr D Leach for Year 13 and Dr P Walker or Mrs L Vadali for Year 11. We would like to reassure you that any awarded grades will be fair and follow the strict guidance that we receive from Ofqual. **The awarded grades will not only be a reflection of the student performance so far, but also the engagement of the students with the learning in the coming months.**

We would like to remind all students to continue to build on their good work so far and maintain the momentum throughout the rest of this year. Students should take it one day at a time, work hard, be positive, and let us know if they have any questions or concerns.

Yours Sincerely

Mr A B Green  
Principal