



CGW.jbr

25<sup>th</sup> March 2020

**Re: exams, universities and beyond**

Dear Year 13 Students,

I hope that as you get this letter you are healthy and well and staying as active as you can under house arrest.

I am very sorry that your interim departure from school was so rushed, but as I said on the day, that is not the end, the school will reopen and when it does, we will have a proper goodbye and everything that goes with it. We will discuss that more when we know the time-frames.

But, in the interim, I wanted to talk to you about examinations. I have held off writing hoping for more clarity but there has been none, so I have looked around at other schools, and what we know is happening, in order to work out what the best way forward for you will be. Even though I hate bullet points, I have organised it using them. Here we go:

- The Government and Ofqual say that there will be no exams and instead they will gather data and feed it into an algorithm, which will determine your examination grade. If you are happy with it, great, if you are not happy with it then examinations will be offered. These will be sat when the coronavirus has been defeated.
- The actual data is not clear, but will probably take the form of your GCSEs, your mock results, any coursework etc. I also strongly suspect they will use the school's historical pattern of results and possibly the county's and national trends. But we do not really know.
- I strongly suspect that they will also look for any robust testing data which can be produced and, so long as we can show that it is serious and directed to the examination, it will carry weight.

Which leads me to...

- After Easter, I will have your teachers set you all a task a week, for four weeks. The tasks will be about an hour long each and will explicitly reflect the examination questions and style that you would have sat. I will have you complete them and send them back in after which, they will be marked against the generic mark schemes used by your examination boards. The results will be kept, as will the questions and mark schemes used.
- I think that this data will be powerful and will be looked at favourably if/when requested. I also know that every good school that I have spoken to is doing a variant of this for their A level students after Easter for the same reason: we are all desperate to give you a competitive advantage when the results are decided and we believe that this is the vehicle to get you there.
- I cannot make you do it and I cannot make you submit everything on time – all I can say is that, from a position of pure love, I urge you to complete the tasks set as it is in your



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interests to do this so that the school can present as conclusive proof as possible that you deserve the best possible grades.

What this means in practice is that you should get your notes organised (they will have been already) and keep on top of your work over Easter so that you are in a position to give the tests your best and get the best possible grade.

How you do in the test will not necessarily determine your final grade, but it will allow the school to evidence your progress. We'll be able to say you have got better since other data was produced, or you have maintained your performance and not dipped, or whatever applies to you.

I repeat: every good school is doing this, so do not put yourselves at a disadvantage!

At this stage, all you need to do is to corral your notes. If you are unsure about bits of your course contact your teachers.

Over Easter we will send you more detail about it and more of a timeframe, but as I said above, it will run one test a week per subject, for four weeks.

Have as good an Easter as you can and if you have questions ask us (or even email me).

Stay safe,

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Headmaster

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