Elliott Hudson College

The GORSE Academies Trust
Part of

Executive Principal: Post 16 Education: Mr D Holtham BSc (Hons)
Chair of Governors: Maurice Miller BComm FCA

Chief Executive Officer: Sir John Townsley BA (Hons) NPQH

11 January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers of Year 13 students

I hope this letter finds you and your family well. I am very mindful that you will have received a number of communications in recent weeks as we respond to the changing situation presented by the virus. I am also aware that this is a very demanding and uncertain time for all our families. I did feel the need to write to you again as I am very conscious that the events of recent days have raised a number of questions about the awarding of A Level and Vocational grades this summer. I hope by writing to you today you will feel reassured by the approach we are taking.

Last Wednesday, the Secretary of State for Education announced that teacher-assessed grades will be used for the awarding of A Level grades this year. Examinations to award the final grade in each subject for each student will be cancelled. Whilst the specific details of how these grades will be formulated have yet to be released, he did state that he was putting his trust in teachers to formulate grades, rather than an algorithm. This would avoid the situation that students faced when receiving their results in the summer of 2020.

The awarding of Year 13 A Level/Vocational qualifications

As detailed above, the Secretary of State has now confirmed that examination grades will be assessed by teachers and the college this year. As it stands currently there is very little additional information that has been released by the Government in respect of this. Over the coming weeks The Department for Education and Ofqual will provide more guidance, but for now I wanted to stress some very important points:

- All teacher-assessed grades will need to be informed by a strong evidence base and the teacher and college will need to **justify** each grade awarded.

- It is extremely important that **your son/daughter continues to engage fully with their remote learning/in college provision** (where eligible). We will need to continue gathering evidence of students' knowledge, skills and understanding in order to accurately and fairly inform the grading process. **Please speak to your son/daughter about the importance of this and encourage them to attend all their lessons and engage with learning and assessments to the best of their ability.**

- We are currently considering the best course of action with the results of the **December mock examination series**. We will communicate this to students and parents when we are clear about the best way forward. Results will be returned to students when we have greater clarity on the process for the awarding of the final teacher/college assessed grades. We are also investigating solutions for those students who were unable to sit their mock examinations.

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- **We respectfully ask that students and/or parents/carers refrain from approaching members of staff about potential final grades for the A Level/Vocational qualifications**. I am sure you will appreciate why members of staff will not be able to respond to any questions of this nature. Aside from the ethical reasons, teachers/college have not yet decided on the methodology to award grades and await guidance from the Department for Education. In addition, we are still in the process of completing the examination specifications and collecting evidence of students' knowledge, skills, understanding and progress.

- If **access to technology** continues to present a barrier to your son/daughters ability to engage with remote learning please contact the college on: datarequests@elliotthudsoncollege.ac.uk.

I know you will want to support your son/daughter in securing the best grade that they can in each of their qualifications so that they are able to progress into higher education, training or employment. Our students' destinations are of paramount importance to us and we will continue to provide Careers Advice, Support and Guidance to all students. Progression does depend upon students gaining the required knowledge, skills and understanding from their current programmes of study. A focus on progression can motivate students and reinforce the importance of remaining engaged with learning remotely.

As soon as I am able, I will communicate with you the systems that we will put in place for the awarding of the teacher-assessment grades. In the meantime, should you have any questions regarding any aspect of the information above, please email: info@elliotthudsoncollege.ac.uk

Yours faithfully

David Holtham
Executive Principal: 16-19 Education

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