



7 May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

We do hope that you are well in what have been and continue to be the most challenging of times. We are writing to inform you of the updated proposed plan for Year 12 students for the Summer Term.

Last week we launched the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) which is an independent research project that is equivalent to half an A Level. It is an optional course that students can choose to take and investigate a subject of their choice. The skills that they will gain from this project are an excellent foundation for university study. Students have all been sent a presentation with details of the project and Session One of the taught skills has been delivered this week. When we return to school this will be a timetabled lesson once per week but until then there will be tasks to complete remotely. The final project will be handed in next April along with a presentation to peers on findings.

Just before the school closure we were booked as a year group to visit the UCAS exhibition. Unfortunately for obvious reasons this was cancelled. Universities have adapted and are now offering virtual open days as well as webinars that students can watch either live or recorded. For more information please see specific university websites. We were also sad to have to cancel the Post 18 Information Evening for students and parents. The evening sets out the programme that we offer at QEGS for pathways after the Sixth Form. Attached is an adapted presentation in light of the evening not going ahead.

Under normal circumstances this term we would be preparing for the next steps after A Level study. As a school we are signed up to Unifrog which is an online platform bringing all the available information regarding Post 18 options into one single, impartial, user-friendly platform that helps students to make the best choices, and submit the strongest applications. All students in Year 12 have been using the platform this year to research university courses, apprenticeships and taking a gap year. We have advised the students that they now need to begin to draft their personal statement. When they are doing this through Unifrog there is a clear framework and guidance on how to structure along with examples from all courses. Once your daughter is ready for her draft to be checked she simply shares it with the members of staff that she would like to read it. This would normally be her form tutor, as well as any subject teachers linked to the area of study. We would strongly recommend that the majority of students have their personal statement ready by the end of July. This will mean that when they begin Year 13 they will not need to spend time contemplating their application.

As a school, our guidance continues to be for students to stay focused on their studies by completing the work on Google Classroom. It is in their interests to ensure that they are as up to date as possible with their work so that there is an easier transition when we return to school. Teachers are preparing a period of catch up on the work that students have been working on during the school closure to ensure students are confident in the content that has been covered.

In regards to the students' UCAS predicted grades that are submitted on their application form, as a school we would normally use the Year 12 Summer Mock Examinations to help determine a UCAS predicted grade. We have taken the decision not to carry out the examinations this term. At this time we are uncertain whether we will be able to carry out mock examinations in September, and with students needing a clear idea about their predicted grades this term, we feel we cannot base the UCAS predicted grades on these assessments this year. Instead this year we will be using the students' Target Grades as their UCAS Predicted Grades. Your daughter will know her target grades as these were issued to her at the beginning of Year 12. They are also on her report that was sent out in January. If a student would like to apply to a course with entry criteria that are above her targets then she may be asked to complete an assessment in the Autumn term to enable the school to consider a higher prediction. We would also reconsider cases where students outperformed their targets in the January Mock examination.

If we were able to carry out Mock Examinations in the Autumn term, then these would not impact the UCAS Predicted Grade negatively but would be vitally important practice for the students to prepare for the final exams in summer 2021. If these Mock exams do go ahead then students would be given plenty of advanced warning in order for them to be fully prepared.

There are a number of subjects where students are required to complete a Non Examined Assessment (NEA). We are aware that students may be anxious about beginning the research for the NEA as this would normally begin in the summer term. Teachers will be informing students when they need to begin work on this section of the course and have carefully planned and prepared the time that will be needed.

We will continue to send out the weekly wellbeing email to students every Monday which gives them Thoughts for the week as well as updates and resources that they can access. Their immediate focus moving forward should be on preparing their path after A Level study, as well as completing the work that has been set by their teachers.

We would like to reiterate that all of the staff are here to fully support students in whatever way we possibly can at this time. If there is any further information you require or if your daughter is unsure about anything, then please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully

Miss L Southwell
Assistant Headteacher
& Head of Sixth Form

Mr D Jones
Deputy Headteacher