



Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School

Educating Women of the Future

Wednesday 6th January 2021

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

We hope you are well and keeping safe. As you may have seen on the news today the Education Secretary Gavin Williamson announced that the grades for both GCSEs and A Levels in Summer 2021 will be awarded using Teacher Assessment. The following statement below was published today and is directly for students, parents, carers and teachers from Simon Lebus, Interim Chief Regulator at Ofqual.

'We know that this is a difficult time for students, their parents and carers, teachers and trainers. Our message to students is this: please continue to engage as fully as you can in your education. That will be online for the majority of students, or face-to-face for those students still going into their school, college or training provider. This will put you in the best position, whatever arrangements are made for your qualifications. It's 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.'

The way ahead is not straightforward: exams and standardised assessments are the fairest way of determining what a student knows and can do. We need to consider a wide range of qualifications – from A levels and GCSEs to many different vocational and technical qualifications – and the solution won't be the same for all. Following the government's announcement on Monday evening, we also need to consider how alternative arrangements will work for different students, including those who are independent learners. We are discussing alternative arrangements with the Department for Education. We know that many are seeking clarity as soon as possible. We will provide further updates as soon as we can.'

We understand that for all our students who are due to take exams this summer, this will be an extremely difficult time and there will no doubt be questions that you

as families will want to ask. Our guidance to you continues to be for students to stay focused on their studies by completing the tasks that teachers are delivering in the live lessons, as well as completing any additional work that is set. It is in our students' interests to ensure that they are as up to date as possible with their work. The staff are on hand during the school day to support any questions that students may have about the work. They will not have any information to share about assessment or grade award.

We have not been provided with any further information other than that which is contained in this letter. We will await further guidance from Ofqual and update you accordingly. The Education Secretary today also mentioned that there would be 'training and support for teachers in estimating grades to ensure these are awarded fairly and consistently'. Please be assured we will do everything necessary and appropriate to ensure rigour and integrity in our assessments.

Yours faithfully

Violet Walker
Headteacher