

6 January 2021



Holderness Academy
& Sixth Form College

Dear Parents/Carers of students currently in Years 11 and 13

Cancellation of GCSE and A Level Summer 2021 Examinations

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on Monday 4 January 2021 you will probably be aware that the government has taken the decision to cancel all national exams due to take place in summer 2021. In the coming days we expect details of what will replace them, but it seems reasonable to assume students will receive grades based on a similar system to summer 2020. This involved teachers assessing performance using class and homework, coursework, Centre Assessed Exam results and other relevant evidence. When the specific requirements of schools and students become available, we will contact you again.

We are aware of the potential anxiety and disappointment this news may bring. The government had consistently told students, parents and teachers that exams would happen this year, and we have worked collectively towards this goal. During these challenging times we, as an academy, will continue to tirelessly work "...to empower every child to make a positive difference today; ready for tomorrow". With this in mind we would urge you all to consider our key messages for students, and hope they provide some reassurance:

- 1. Your hard work will still be recognised. None of the effort you have shown so far, and will continue to show in the coming months, will be wasted. On the contrary, the new system will make sure this is fully reflected in your final grade.*
- 2. Your eventual results will be indistinguishable from those obtained via more formal exams, and many would say that they will more truly reflect what you have learnt. In the long run, it won't matter that your grades achieved through this system. The key is that you successfully transfer to the next stage of your education, training or employment. You will still be able to progress to Sixth Form, training providers, and University in the normal way. The value of your GCSE and A Level qualification is not being affected; only the way they are administered. If you continue to work to your potential none of your ambitions for the future will be affected by this decision.*
- 3. The new system will be fair and balanced. Grades will be awarded based on objective evidence. Any grades that your teachers set will be moderated carefully, to ensure they are consistent within and between schools. If any parent or student were to be disappointed with their eventual grade, we expect there to be a mechanism to appeal and take a follow-up exam in the autumn, just as there was in 2020.*

Explorer • Scholar • Leader • Collaborator



We know this change is significant for our students, particularly in the context of earlier challenges created by Covid-19 last year. I hope that the points above re-assure you and our students that if they sustain as much enthusiasm for learning as possible they will reach their full potential. In the coming days we will further process the news, talk to our students directly and work with them tirelessly to help ensure their individual success.

Our simple message for all students is:

“Log on to Google Classroom each day, keep working hard, and know that every piece of work you complete will still make a difference. Good luck!”

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'S Wilson', written in black ink.

Mr S Wilson
Headteacher