



Weekly Bulletin for Braintree Sixth Form Students, Parents and Carers Friday 4 April 2020

As we reach the end of the Spring term in a manner that none of us could have been expecting, we send our very best wishes to you and your families and hope that you are all safe and well. At the time of writing, Ofqual have just published their initial guidance over the awarding of exam grades this summer for A Level, GCSE, AS and EPQ qualifications. We are looking at this guidance closely at the moment, and anticipate hearing about vocational qualifications in the near future. A link to the guidance and further information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/how-gcses-as-a-levels-will-be-awarded-in-summer-2020>

Year 13 Students – Awarding of Exam Grades

Ofqual have published guidance this morning about how exam grades will be calculated this year. They have written a letter to affected students about this. An extract from this is here:

I understand how unsettling the past weeks have been for you, since the announcement that exams have been cancelled this summer, and that you are urgently waiting for news. I wanted to let you know what we are doing to provide you with grades. Our over-riding aim in this is to be fair to students this summer and to make sure you are not disadvantaged in your progress to sixth form, college, university, apprenticeships, training or work because of these unprecedented conditions.

How will grades be calculated?

Your school or college will be asked to send exam boards two pieces of information for each of your subjects, based on what they know about your work and achievements:

- the grade they believe you were most likely to get if teaching, learning and exams had happened as planned*
- within each subject, the order of students at your school or college, by performance, for each grade. This information will be used to standardise judgements – allowing fine tuning of the standard applied across schools and colleges*

Your school or college will consider a range of things like your classwork and homework; your results in assignments and any mock exams; any non-exam assessment or coursework you might have done; and your general progress during your course. This information will allow us, with exam boards, to standardise grades across schools and colleges, to make sure that, as far as possible, results are fair and that students are not advantaged or disadvantaged because their schools or colleges are more generous or harsh than others when making those judgements. That means the final grade you get could be different from the one your school or college sends to the exam board.

Do I need to complete any new work for my school/college to submit a grade?

Your school or college is not required to set additional mock exams or homework for your centre assessment grade, and you won't be disadvantaged if you were not set, or were unable to complete, any work given out after schools were closed.

Can I see the grades my school/college submits for me?

No, this information will be confidential. Please don't ask your teachers, or anyone else at your school or college, to tell you the grades they will be sending to the exam boards or where they have placed you in the order of students; they will not be allowed to share this with you.

Year 12 Expectations over Work Set during the School Closure

We continue to expect that Year 12 students complete work set by teachers during the school closure, and that they are contacting teachers by email/Edulink if they have any queries. So that students keep up with the courses and coverage of new topics, it is essential that work is completed and any issues are communicated to staff. Students should make sure they mark work as 'Done' on Edulink so that their teacher can see that they have engaged with the tasks set.

Year 12 Internal Exams Postponed

At the time of writing, we do not have any formal confirmation of when the school and sixth form might reopen. We are planning for all eventualities, but given the disruption of the past couple of weeks and the uncertainty about the start of next term, we are postponing the exams for Year 12 students which were due to start on 26 April 2020. We will arrange internal exams in due course but will wait for more information about schools reopening before confirming any arrangements for these. Year 12 students should continue to review and recap on work as part of preparation for their final exams next year and we will let you know about the next steps in due course.

Careers Advice and Guidance

During the school closure, we continue to receive support from Directions, who provide independent advice and guidance about careers and progression. Although face to face meetings are not possible at the moment, our careers adviser is still able to provide support to students as they look ahead and plan their next steps. Anyone in Year 12 or 13 who would like to have some support and advice over their progression after sixth form should contact janelouise.cure@notleyhigh.com.

Should the school continue to be closed after the Easter break, Year 12 students will be provided with resources and tasks to ensure they can prepare for their plans post-Year 13. We have subscribed to EtonX courses for Year 13 which focus on employability skills and will provide more details of these to students next term.

Safeguarding – Gambling

Earlier in the term, Patrick Foster spoke to sixth form students about gambling and his own personal experience of developing a gambling addiction while he was a student at Durham University. Patrick has recently published an article aimed at parents and carers about gambling and gaming during this period of school closure. A link to this is here:

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/helping-your-child-manage-boredom-temptations-online-world-foster?fbclid=IwAR15hoQMOcDhvpDxx9cUZMNeVdTCqfGJdx2NqbmX0dawVBb5eehHPdzR0LI>

Many thanks for your continued support in this challenging time.

Mrs M Townsend
Assistant Headteacher – KS5