



Dear Parents and Carers,

Although this information is primarily to parents and carers of Year 11 and Post 16 students I have sent this to our whole school community for reference. Below I have set out some of the latest Government updates regarding exams in 2021.

Year 11 and Post 16 Update

Firstly, huge congratulations to our Year 11 students. They have demonstrated such high levels of effort, maturity and focus during English speaking exams this week. As I am sure parents are aware, the media have suggested some updated thinking around examinations this academic year and I just wanted to outline what we already knew and new information that has come out in the press today.

What we knew already:

- There have been **some** small changes made to **some** courses so that less content will be examined in these cases. This mostly applies to GCSE courses.
- GCSE and A-Level exams **will be going ahead this summer**, but have been delayed by three weeks to allow for extra teaching time.
- GCSE and A-Level results will therefore be released to students later than usual on:
 - Tuesday 24 August (A-Level / Level 3 BTEC)
 - Friday 27 August (GCSE / Level 2 courses)

What we now know from today's update:

- The exam boards will be applying slightly **more generous grade boundaries** than in a normal year so that this year's results, overall, are in line with the results awarded in August 2020;
- We will be told in advance about **some** topics that are going to be covered in exams so that we can focus remaining teaching and revision on these (an update on **which courses and topics** will be affected is going to be released in January);
- Extra resources (for example formula sheets) will be provided in **some** exams, reducing the amount of information students need to memorise;
- If students miss one or more exams due to self-isolation or sickness **but have still completed a proportion of their qualification they will still receive a grade**, based on the papers they have taken;
- There will be **an extra set of back-up exams** which will take place in the summer (straight after the main exam season) to give students a second chance to sit a 'contingency paper' if they miss all exams for a course due to illness or self-isolation;
- In the extreme case where a student has a **legitimate reason to miss all their papers**, then a **validated teacher informed assessment can be used**, only once all chances to sit an exam have passed. This is expected to only be in very rare cases;
- **Students studying BTECs** will also have some changes made to the courses so that this is fair and in line with the changes being made to GCSE and A-Levels.
- [Read more about this announcement on GOV.UK](#)
- [Read the exams guidance on GOV.UK](#)
- [parent Q&A document](#)



The John of Gaunt School
A Community Academy

We welcome this update today and look forward to learning more about the specific adaptations we can expect when the information is released in January and also consequently any official DFE updates.

You can be assured that as soon as we receive this we will be in contact again to explain what this means for our students and what we will be doing to further support them.

As always, if you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards,

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