

## Orchard School Bristol

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**Headteacher:** Mrs Julia Hinchliffe **MA (Hons), MA, NPQH**

24 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

### Year 11 GCSE Students - Further Details on Exams and Grades for Students

Following the decision to close schools and not proceed with this summer's public exams, the Government has announced more details regarding how grades will be awarded this summer. For all of you this will be a worrying time and I am sure you want to have some clarity. The following is a summary of what has been communicated to us to date:

- Examination regulators will develop and set out a process that will provide a calculated grade to each student which reflects their performance as fairly as possible, and will work with us and the other exam boards to ensure this is consistently applied for all students
- Exam boards will be asking teachers, who know their students well, to submit their judgement about the grade that they believe the student would have received if exams had gone ahead
- To produce this, teachers will be asked to take into account a range of evidence and data including performance on mock/pre-public exams and non-exam assessment. Clear guidance on how to do this fairly and robustly will be provided to schools and colleges soon
- Exam boards will then combine this information with other relevant data, including prior attainment, and use this information to produce a calculated grade for each student, which will be a best assessment of the work they have put in
- Regulators and exam boards will be discussing with teachers' representatives before finalising the approach, to ensure that it's as fair as possible. More information will be provided as soon as possible
- The aim is to provide these calculated grades to students before the end of July
- These grades will be indistinguishable from those provided in other years
- They also aim to ensure that the distribution of grades follows a similar pattern to that in other years, so that this year's students aren't disadvantaged
- Students will be able to appeal their grades if they don't believe the right process has been followed. More information to follow on this one, but we understand that a student would be able to take the examination in the autumn should he/she feel it is appropriate to do so



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- There will also be an option to sit exams early in the next academic year for any students who wish to – and students can also choose to sit exams next summer

It is important that students continue to work on all learning tasks set by their subject teachers. Please check your Gmail messages and Google Classrooms as well as the packs being sent home.

Where possible, students should finish off any outstanding pieces of Non Examined Assessment, coursework, portfolio work, and assignments as directed by subject teachers. These will be used by subject staff to form the body of evidence we use to make the judgement about grading in a subject.

We appreciate that there will be limitations for some subjects (e.g. Sport Science, Health & Fitness, Music, Art and 3D Art subjects) and in any subjects that require teacher supervision, so subject staff will use the progress evidence they currently hold to inform the grade submitted.

You are expected to keep a record, whether in an exercise book or in google drive of the work that you are completing for all subjects. Please direct any queries to Mat Grafton ([m.graffton@osb.school](mailto:m.graffton@osb.school)) who leads this year group.

I hope this new information will answer some of your questions – but I appreciate that you may still have some. As we receive further clarification on this matter, we will communicate it with you, as this is an unsettling time for us all.

Working together, we will ensure that all the hard work by students, staff and yourselves will all be worthwhile and that the students will receive the grades they need to progress to the next stage of their lives.

Thank you for your patience and support.

Yours sincerely

Orchard School Staff