



23 March 2020

Dear parents and carers

Following the decision to close schools and not go ahead with this summer's exams, the government has announced more details of how grades will be awarded this summer. Please find below a summary of the main points:

- 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 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 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 is 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.
- We will also aim to ensure that the distribution of grades follows a similar pattern to that in other years, so that this year's students are not disadvantaged.
- Students will be able to appeal their grades if they do not believe the right process has been followed.
- 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.

This means that predicted grades by teaching staff will be of great importance. We have therefore asked all teachers to take great care and to take careful account of a wide range of evidence in reaching these predicted grades:

- The quality of work and results of assessments throughout the course.
- The quality of coursework completed and partially completed including grades already awarded for coursework.
- Mock exam grades, but taking into account that some of our most conscientious students in past years have improved on average by almost a whole grade between mock exams and their final summer exams.
- The knowledge of your Faculty Leaders and the most experienced subject teachers in your faculty who will be able to advise colleagues on how to make predictions as accurate as possible.

We have further advised the subject teachers to:

1. Ensure they have all the evidence needed.
2. Inform students working from home to complete any outstanding coursework and submit to this electronically if possible.
3. Advise students to keep their work, so that if further evidence was required this could be used.
4. Initially submit predictions to their Faculty Leader, so that these can be moderated by our most experienced teachers before submission to the examinations officer and the examination boards.
5. Advise all students working from home to continue working, so that if they do choose to take the exam in September, they are in a good position to do so.
6. Take particular account of students who are achieving well above their target grade due to eg being extremely diligent and having excellent study habits. For these students in particular, we need to be ready to provide clear evidence explaining why their predicted grade is justified.

I am aware that accurately allocating predicted grades will be a huge responsibility for our subject teachers, but can assure you that they will perform this vital task with great diligence.

We will provide further information about awarding of examination grades when this is made available to schools. If you have any questions about the award of examination grades, please could I ask that you initially contact the following members of our Senior Leadership Team.

- For students in Y11 - peter.hammond@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk
- For students in the Sixth Form - mark.hawksworth@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk

Lastly I would like to reassure you of the following:

1. Every student who has applied to our Sixth Form (JM6) will be offered a place regardless of the final grades awarded by examination boards.
2. We will use every ounce of our energy to persuade colleges and employers to do the same for students applying for apprenticeships, college or employment.
3. We will provide unstinting individual support and bespoke advice to every Y13 student and support them in moving on to their chosen university, further education, employment or apprenticeship.

With my thanks for your continuing support and very best wishes

Yours sincerely



Andrew Evans
Headteacher