

8<sup>th</sup> January 2021



Pilton Community College,  
Chaddiford Lane,  
Barnstaple EX31 1RB  
T: 01271 374381  
F: 01271 349049  
E: admin@piltoncollege.org.uk  
W: piltoncollege.org.uk

Dear Year 11

Following the Prime Minister's National Lockdown announcement on Monday 4 January, Gavin Williamson, the Education Secretary, announced in the Houses of Parliament that GCSE and A Level examinations would not go ahead as planned in 2021. The impact this action will have had on you is not underestimated. I share your frustration and disappointment that you will not be able to take examinations in the subjects that you have worked so hard for. How will GCSE grades be awarded? is the key question that we are all asking. The lack of clarity from the Department of Education on the "alternative arrangements" is impacting you, parents and teachers alike.

#### **How will GCSE grades be awarded?**

A decision has not yet been made. The Education Secretary expects a "teacher assessed system" to award the grades rather than an examination. A consultation will be launched next week and concluded swiftly to give certainty to schools, colleges and students on the process and information that will be used to determine a "teacher assessed grade". I can assure you, as soon as we know, you will be updated.

#### **What evidence will be used to determine grades?**

As indicated above, we do not have this information. We can assume that all internal examinations, tests and mock exams will be used together with classwork, homework and engagement in lessons. I want to reassure you; we will not base any teacher assessed grade solely on the outcome of the mocks taken in the Autumn term. Until the February half term at the earliest, you will receive your education remotely. It is vital that you fully engage in this programme as the work you complete during this time will play an important part in the teacher assessments.

#### **Will I sit another mock examination?**

We had always intended to run another set of English, Maths and Science exams. Due to the cancellation of the summer examinations, I can confirm we will hold a full suite of mock examinations in all subjects when you return to face-to-face teaching. We shall inform you of the dates as soon as we are able. Please be reassured, we plan to deliver these several weeks after you return. It is therefore important that you factor revision into your day just as you would have planned to revise had you attended school normally.

#### **Will BTEC examinations take place?**

We have decided that any BTEC examinations that are planned this term will still take place. Whilst teacher assessments will form the final grade decision, students have prepared themselves for these exams and therefore will be in the best position to demonstrate their knowledge of the subject.

Cont.

## **Remote Learning Programme**

Under the difficult circumstances of this national Lockdown, I hope you are enjoying our Remote Learning programme. We believe having direct teacher input through live lessons and the opportunity to ask your teacher questions through Microsoft Teams will provide you with the best possible education so that you can demonstrate your learning and progress in the mock examinations that we will hold. I am sure you will appreciate the efforts your teachers have made to develop and adapt their teaching resources to be delivered remotely.

The situation we all find ourselves in is far from ideal. Your resilience, engagement and maturity in the weeks ahead will ensure you will be successful in whatever post 16 education provision you are choosing. I will update you as soon as I am able with further information.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G Hill', written in a cursive style.

Mr Graham Hill  
Headteacher