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Dear Year 11 students

I thought I would write to you and provide a brief update on the developing picture regarding this year's qualifications and how they might be awarded.

The only certainty is that all of you **will** receive the GCSE or BTEC qualification for all of the subjects that you are studying. The uncertainty is how the grade that you will be awarded will be ascertained.

In his letter to Ofqual, published yesterday and with a hyperlink below, the Secretary of State, Gavin Williamson wrote, **'We cannot guarantee that all students will be in a position to sit their exams fairly this summer and it is my firm policy position that alternative arrangements are needed to award qualifications.'**

He then went on to say, **'I am asking Ofqual to consult on alternative arrangements for GCSE, AS and A-levels which should involve the awarding of grades based on teacher assessment.'**

The full letter can be found by following the link below.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/951797/Letter_from_Gavin_Williamson_to_Simon_Lebus.pdf

The response from Ofqual can be found, in full, by following the second link below and gives an insight into some of the possibilities Ofqual are considering to consult upon. For example, the letter states, **'In particular, we will want the consultation to consider the role of externally set short papers. We know the more the evidence comes from students' performance in externally set papers, the fairer and more consistent teacher assessments are likely to be, because all students are given the chance to show what they can do in the same way.'**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/simon-lebus-responds-to-the-secretary-of-states-letter-of-13-january-2021/letter-from-simon-lebus-chief-regulator-to-the-secretary-of-state-for-education-13-january-2021-html>

The intention is that the consultation should engage with the widest possible range of people and organisations, including seeking the views of the students and their parents and carers. We expect the consultation paper to be made available within the next few days and the consultation period should be for two weeks. When it is made available, I will write to you again.

We know that these will be very unsettling and difficult times for many of you and we will continue to prepare you all for the very best outcomes, irrespective of the assessment plans which will be decided upon in due course. We know you well and we also know what you are capable of achieving. So, in the absence of this summer's examinations, you need to engage fully with your remote learning, complete to the best of your ability and submit any tasks that are asked of you. By doing this, you will be ensuring that your teachers have the very best of you on which to base their teacher assessments when the time comes, and that we have all the evidence we need should anyone challenge our grading decisions.

You are, more than ever, in charge of your own destiny. Hang in there!

Yours faithfully

Mr S P Laheney
Headteacher



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