

Dear parents and guardians of year 11 students,

## **Government announcement on examinations and grades**

Last week it was announced that this year's summer examinations, including A Levels, GCSEs and other qualifications, were cancelled, following the government's decision to close schools in response to the coronavirus outbreak. Over the weekend the government announced their plans for ensuring that all students receive appropriate grades for the qualifications they have been studying towards.

It is important that your son/daughter continues to study as normal and completes all assignments as directed by his/her teachers during this time. This work may be included in the overall assessment process.

In summary:

- Exam boards will be asking teachers to submit their judgement about the grade that they believe the student would have received if exams had gone ahead.
- Teachers will consider a range of evidence and data – including performance on mock exams and non-exam assessment. The exam boards will combine this information with other relevant data, including prior attainment, to produce a calculated grade for each student, which will be a best assessment of the work they have put in.
- The aim is to provide these calculated grades to students before the end of July. In terms of a permanent record, they will have the same value as those awarded in previous years and will be treated equally in comparison to those from previous years as well.
- The aim is to ensure that the distribution of grades follows a similar pattern to that in other years – this means that this year's students will not face a systematic disadvantage because of these extraordinary circumstances.
- If students do not believe the correct process has been followed in their case, they will be able to appeal on that basis.
- In addition, if they do not feel their calculated grade reflects their performance, they will have the opportunity to sit an exam at the earliest reasonable opportunity once schools are re-opened. Students will also have the option to sit their exams in Summer 2021.
- University representatives have confirmed that they expect universities to be flexible and do all they can to support students and ensure they can progress to higher education.
- The government's priority is now to ensure affected students can move on as planned to the next stage of their lives, including going into employment, starting university, college or sixth form courses, or an apprenticeship in the autumn.

We hope that this clarity will give some comfort to our students and their families at this extremely difficult time. If you have any questions, then please do not hesitate to contact myself ([s215Kcraig@smiths-wood.solihull.sch.uk](mailto:s215Kcraig@smiths-wood.solihull.sch.uk)) or Mr Cornell ([s215Rcornell@smiths-wood.solihull.sch.uk](mailto:s215Rcornell@smiths-wood.solihull.sch.uk))

Full details of the government's announcement and the process that has be outlined can be found here: <https://bit.ly/2wfM7rR>

Yours faithfully,



Mrs K Craig  
**Head of Academy**