

22 November 2021

Dear Parents & Carers,

As we approach the mock exam period for both Year 11 and 13, there have been some updates from the government regarding the exams that are planned to take place in Summer 2022 and Ofqual and JCQ have recently released some guidance on the contingency arrangements for these exams. These are the outline of the arrangements that they intend to put in place in the event that examinations are cancelled and they have asked schools and colleges to ensure that they follow this guidance to aim for a consistent approach across the country.

Both sets of guidance make clear that the firm intention and government's policy decision is that examinations will go ahead in Summer 2022. This guidance is being shared now so arrangements can be put in place, *just in case* they need to be cancelled.

The key points from both pieces of guidance are summarised below but if you would like to read the full versions of these documents, please access them via the links at the bottom of this letter

Ofqual have also published an open letter to all students which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-letters-arrangements-for-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2022/letter-to-students>

Key points:

- If exams need to be cancelled, a process to produce Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) would be implemented again. This would be similar to (but not identical to) the process used last year.
- It is very clear that schools are not being asked to produce TAGs as a 'just in case' measure but should consider how we make sure that the assessments we would normally be doing over the course of the year could feed into the TAGs process if it is needed.
- The way we hold mock exams, is already very much in line with this guidance as we try to replicate the experience that students will have in the real exams. There are a couple of changes that are different for this year which are:
 - For maths and science, there will be formulae sheets provided for both the mock and summer exams
 - Students will be made aware that if TAGs are required, that this is one of the assessments that will be used to produce their grade (this has already been shared with year 11 in tutor time and a recording of this input is in their year group and tutor group Teams. This will be shared with year 13s via tutor input shortly also).
 - If there is malpractice, we must report it to JCQ (this is not normally required for internal exam style assessments)
 - We must keep all original copies of mock exam papers completed by students
 - After the mock exams, we can share the marks awarded and the grade that has been achieved in that paper. We must not attempt to predict what the TAG would be.

Following the mock exams, we will collect data on a second set of assessments in the Spring term. This is something we already do here at St. Peter's ahead of collecting in predicted grades around Easter time. These usually take place in the weeks running up to Easter at a time decided by each subject area. For this year, we will look to identify a couple of weeks in that half term when these should take place and will give further information on this after Christmas so that students can plan their revision time and are clear about when they will be. If a third set of assessments in the Summer

term is required, we will again, share information about this in due course.

As already mentioned, these are assessments that we would be holding anyway as this forms an important part of how we identify areas of strength and areas for revision with students. By ensuring we make these small changes, we can ensure that if TAGs are required, they will also meet the requirements set out by JCQ and not add additional assessments to the summer term for students.

I appreciate that this may generate some concerns for students and parents and carers at this time. It is really important to remember that the mock exams are one piece of assessment data and while they should be taken seriously, are not the only thing that would be used to produce a TAG. I would also like to reassure you again, that every statement and document from both Ofqual and JCQ make clear that schools and students should be working towards the exams that are very much planned to run in Summer 2022. If there are any further updates, we will of course be in touch to share this information with you. The links to both documents mentioned in this letter are below:

Ofqual guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-contingency-arrangements-for-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-summer-2022/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-other-exam-centres-on-contingency-arrangements-for-students-entering-gcses-as-and-a-levels-the-advanced-extension>

JCQ Guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-contingency-arrangements-for-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-summer-2022/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-other-exam-centres-on-contingency-arrangements-for-students-entering-gcses-as-and-a-levels-the-advanced-extension>

I hope that this letter has been helpful in clarifying the contingency arrangements for exams. If you have any further questions, then please do not hesitate to get in contact. Both year groups have been working incredibly hard this year and I would like to commend them on their positive attitude to their learning and wish them the very best of luck in their mock exams this term.

Kind regards,



Mrs Gould

Deputy Headteacher