



Ysgol Bae Baglan

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Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope that this letter finds you and your families safe and well as we continue to adjust to the new situation that we find ourselves in.

Pupils at YBB have been hugely affected by the Coronavirus emergency and as we are now entering what would have been the extremely busy exam season, I'm writing to provide you with a summary of the latest developments from Qualifications Wales and Examination Awarding Bodies.

As we know, all Year 11 pupils should be starting their GCSE exams this week, but these have been cancelled. I would like to assure parents / carers and pupils that as a school, we are doing our utmost to ensure that no pupil will be disadvantaged by the situation we find ourselves in. There is no intention for learners to sit their GCSEs when schools return in the autumn, instead they will be awarded a fair grade to recognise their work.

The grades for GCSE qualifications will be calculated by teachers using a range of evidence. They will be based on a combination of factors, which may include marks for work completed to date and standardised teacher assessment grades. Teacher assessment grades will be based on what teachers would expect a learner to achieve at the end of the course, and need to represent a fair, reasonable and carefully considered judgement of the most likely grade that might be achieved in normal circumstances. This would be a professional judgement based on the combined assessment information held for that learner and will be a holistic judgement, rather than focusing on a single source of evidence like mock examinations.

All teachers are fully aware of what is needed of them and they are currently working through assessments already undertaken, together with data we hold on predicted grades, to ensure that the grades the pupils are awarded in August are as close to what they would have achieved had they sat the exams. This is a rigorous process and one with several layers of internal and external scrutiny. **In adherence with the published guidance set out by Qualifications Wales, school staff can not disclose centre assessed grades to pupils.**

Therefore I would ask you to continue to discuss with your son/ daughter the importance of not asking school staff for any indication of their centre assessed grades. I can now confirm that results will be issued to pupils, as planned, on Thursday 20th August from 9:00am in the Main School Hall.

The vast majority of pupils in Year 10 were also due to sit examination units in several subject areas, depending on Options chosen in Year 9, which would have contributed towards their final GCSE grade to be awarded in the summer of 2021. For these learners there will be no issuing of estimated results. However, for these there will be two options:

- They can choose to sit the units they plan to take in summer 2021, with their overall GCSE grade calculated on the basis of that performance only.
- Alternatively they can chose to sit the Year 10 units in summer 2021, along with the Year 11 exams.

Whichever option a learner chooses, they will be awarded the best grade from either route.

I know that many year 10 pupils will be worried about the amount of time that they have missed from school and their studies. Discussions at a national level are being had at the moment to ensure that pupils who are going from Year 10 into Year 11 will not be disadvantaged. As soon as this information is released to schools we will let you know. In addition you might find it useful to visit the WJEC Exam Board website for up-to-date information.

<https://www.wjec.co.uk/articles/covid-19-coronavirus-advice/>

For our Year 9 leaners all Option choices have been finalised and they would be looking to start these subjects after the May half term holiday. As it stands, it is unlikely that that this will happen due to the current restrictions in place. However, the timetable has been set and their new timetable, showing compulsory and option subjects for KS4, will go live on SMH on Tuesday May 26th. Should the learners not return after the half term break, work for both the compulsory subjects and options will be set through the usual procedures, on SMH, which we have had in place since closure on March 20th.

The delay in starting the courses without face-to-face teaching is by no means insurmountable as many schools commence GCSEs in September.

As and when we receive updates from Welsh Government regarding examinations we will immediately make these available on our Website and via the usual social media platforms.

Take care

Gareth Williams

(Deputy Headteacher-Curriculum)