

The Sir John Colfox Academy



Inspiring Learning, Achieving Excellence

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Dear Parents and students

RE: GCSE and A Level Exams

We understand how unsettling the past weeks have been for you, since the announcement that exams have been cancelled this summer, and that you are urgently waiting for news. We wanted to let you know what Ofqual, the national exams regulator, are doing to provide you with grades. Their over-riding aim is to be fair to students this summer and to make sure they are not disadvantaged in their progress to sixth form, college, university, apprenticeships, training or work because of these unprecedented conditions.

The information below covers GCSEs, AS and A levels, plus Extended Project Qualifications and Additional Extension Awards in maths. We are still waiting for clarification with regards to BTEC and other vocational courses and will update you as soon as there is an announcement.

How will my grades be calculated?

Schools will be asked to send exam boards two pieces of information for each of your subjects, based on what we know about your work and achievements:

1. The grade they believe you were most likely to get if teaching, learning and exams had happened as planned.
2. Within each subject, a rank order of students at the school, by performance, for each grade. This information will be used to standardise judgements at national level.

Your teachers will consider a range of factors like your classwork and homework; your results in assignments and any mock exams; any non-exam assessment or coursework you might have done; and your general progress during your course.

This information will allow Ofqual and the exam boards to standardise grades across schools and colleges, to make sure that, as far as possible, results are fair and that students are not advantaged or disadvantaged because their schools or colleges are more generous or harsh than others when making those judgements. That means the final grade you get could be different from the one your school or college sends to the exam board.

Do I need to complete any new work for my school/college to submit a grade?

The school will not set additional mock exams, homework or coursework tasks to inform the

calculated grade for each student in each subject. We believe that some students would be disadvantaged if this was the case.

Can I see the grades that have been submitted for me?

No, this information will be confidential. Please don't ask your teachers, or anyone else at the school, to tell you the grades they will be sending to the exam boards or where they have placed you in the order of students. We are not be allowed to share this with you.

I am re-sitting a GCSE exam this summer. Will I still get a grade?

Yes – as far as we understand from the guidance released by Ofqual, students who are re-sitting GCSE exams this summer will receive a grade this summer.

When will I get my results?

Ofqual have confirmed that results won't be delayed after the dates they were expected in August. They are going to try to issue results a little earlier than normal.

Can I take my exams another time?

Ofqual are working with exam boards to offer additional exams in the autumn term as soon as it is possible to do so.

I am an A Level student. What should I do now?

You should make use the most of your time to prepare for your next steps. Contact universities, colleges and employers and find out what steps you could be doing to prepare. Engage with reading lists, summer tasks and research projects. Some students have successfully begun work on MOOCs (Massively Open Online Courses) and this is an excellent, productive use of time.

Remember - you may wish to sit an A Level exam in the autumn: this option remains open to you if you wish to improve your calculated grade. Continue to work towards your exams if you wish to prepare for this option.

I am a GCSE student. What should I do now?

If you are a GCSE student we do not recommend that you take a long break until school resumes. For your own mental health and intellectual development it is important to stay engaged in academic work. There are two options for GCSE students:

1. **Students hoping to progress to A Levels:** If you are planning to progress to Sixth Form or to College, you can access A Level bridging work in your chosen subjects via Microsoft Teams (you have been shown how to access Teams via Office365), and through the school website: <https://www.colfox.org/summer-bridging-work/>. If you are taking a vocational course at a college then we would recommend contacting the provider to ask if there is any work you should complete before beginning the course.
2. **Students who may wish to sit a GCSE exam in the autumn:** If you are likely to want to sit an exam in the autumn term, then you should continue to prepare for this exam. Your teachers have been asked to set revision tasks and work for you to complete independently during the school closure, to give you the best possible chance of success in any exam that you decide to take. This work can be accessed through Microsoft Teams (you have been shown how to access Teams via Office365) or in the 'Knowledge Organiser' section of the school website: <https://www.colfox.org/homework-by-subject/>.

If you would like to read the full set of guidance from Ofqual about how GCSE and A Level qualifications will be awarded this summer, you can access the information using the following link:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/how-gcses-as-a-levels-will-be-awarded-in-summer-2020>

Yours faithfully,



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