

11<sup>th</sup> January 2021

## Dear Year 11 Students, Parents and Carers

The Secretary of State for Education confirmed on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January that public examinations are cancelled this year. Students will be awarded grades based on teacher assessment.

No more detail was given than that and there are still many questions to be answered. We do not know when the grades are to be awarded or which work/assessments they will be based on. Therefore, we must continue to deliver the specifications as we would have been doing in a normal year, until we have further detail on the judgements we are to make.

Continuing to follow full programmes of study and following a very strict daily structure of purposeful study is essential for many reasons:

- Knowledge and understanding are not simply for passing examinations. They benefit the student's personal growth and development.
- Knowledge and skills will be needed for students' next steps. The jump from GCSE to the start of year 12 is a huge one. Without all the knowledge of their GCSE courses students will be significantly disadvantaged and this would impact upon their A-Level achievement. Knowledge from one academic discipline supports others. Don't make the mistake in thinking they only need good knowledge in the GCSEs that they are planning to continue next year.
- For students to stop working, this would mean another significant break from purposeful education for a further 9 months before they start the next stage of their lives. They would be woefully unprepared both in terms of work habits and knowledge/skills unless they keep working.
- **As we do not yet know how we will be assessing students, part of our judgements will inevitably be about how well they engage and have made progress thus far and continue to do so.**
- In order to be successful in their next stage assessments, for example A-Levels if they are currently in Year 11, students need to be rehearsing information and committing it to their long-term memory, an essential skill that they need to have practised and applied

- All other students will learn remotely, following their usual timetable of lessons.
- Our staff remain committed to providing a high-quality learning experience to students, even if it's not live in school. We hope you will understand that school staff also have families and personal circumstances to balance with their dedication to school.
- We have identified a number of students who do not have access to technology or Wi-Fi at home. Where there is genuine need or hardship and we have not already supported you with this, please contact your Achievement Coordinator.

I hope the information above provides some clarity and if you have any questions, please feel free to email me on: [mdu@dukesacademy.org.uk](mailto:mdu@dukesacademy.org.uk).

Yours sincerely



**Monica Duncan**  
**Principal**