



15<sup>th</sup> January 2021

**Iceni Academy**  
Stoke Road, Methwold, Thetford, Norfolk IP26 4PE  
T: 01366 728333 E: office@iceniacademy.org.uk

Principal: Mrs Lesley Hogg



Dear Parent/Carer

### **GCSE/BTEC Examinations in summer 2021**

I hope this letter finds you and your family safe and well.

As you are aware, the government announced last week that GCSE/BTEC examinations in their usual format have been cancelled this summer. Whilst this is very similar to the summer exams in 2020, it is becoming increasingly clear that there is an expectation that more evidence will be required this year to support teacher-assessed grades.

It is good news that the government will not be using any formulas to calculate student grades, which led to a high level of anxiety amongst students, parents and staff last year. However, as there is more time in the lead up to the summer examinations, recent announcements suggest that schools will have to provide more proof to support their teacher judgements. In a letter on Wednesday to Ofqual, the body who oversee qualifications, the Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson made the following points:

- It is my view that a teacher's final judgement on a student's grade ought to be as late as possible in the academic year to maximise remaining teaching time and ensure students are motivated to remain engaged in education.
- In addition, I would like to explore the possibility of providing externally set tasks or papers, in order that teachers can draw on this resource to support their assessments of students.
- Schools and colleges should undertake quality assurance of their teachers' assessments and provide reassurance to the exam boards. We should provide training and guidance to support that, and there should also be external checks in place to support fairness and consistency between different institutions and to avoid schools and colleges proposing anomalous grades.

You can read the full letter at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/951797/Letter\\_from\\_Gavin\\_Williamson\\_to\\_Simon\\_Lebus.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/951797/Letter_from_Gavin_Williamson_to_Simon_Lebus.pdf)

Given the comments made in the letter, it is therefore essential that your son/daughter continues to engage fully with remote learning during this period of national lockdown. We would not want students to fall into the trap that they can stop working and engaging, as their teachers will be generating their examination grade. It is very clear from the announcements, that learning and work that occurs between now and the summer will count towards final grades.

We must also be mindful, that the learning that occurs in Year 11 is an important steppingstone to post 16 courses, whether they are A level, vocational or apprenticeships. Therefore, it is imperative that your son/daughter keeps completing the work as this will make the transition to courses in September easier.

We are here to support you and your child during this challenging time. If you are having problems with technology or supporting your son/daughter with the work, please do not hesitate to contact the academy on [helpme@iceni.attrust.org.uk](mailto:helpme@iceni.attrust.org.uk)

We will of course update you when there is clearer guidance from the government and Ofqual on how the summer examinations will be managed.

Please continue to keep safe and well.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Hogg'.

Lesley Hogg  
Principal