

22 April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

You will have received a general email from school on Monday. I wanted to take this opportunity to clarify a few details specific to year 11.

Awarding GCSE level grades

As you will have seen from the email sent on the last day of term 4, the process for awarding grades has been announced. We have spent considerable time working out how this will be managed in school so that we can submit the grades that students deserve. We are being asked to provide *“the most likely grade a student would have achieved if they had sat their exams this summer and completed any non-exam assessment”*. I want to assure you that the process we have implemented is very thorough. Teachers, heads of department and SLT will scrutinise all the assessment data, taking into account approach throughout the GCSE and BTEC courses. Schools have been instructed not to share information about the grades awarded.

We will take account of access arrangements such as extra time as well as any other circumstances which we feel may have affected progress. We feel confident that, having seen our students' work throughout the entire GCSE and BTEC courses (school closed just 4 ½ school weeks before the start of the exam season), we have a wealth of information that will enable us to submit accurate grades. Each year, we check our predictions against the actual results and track how much students improve their grades throughout their courses.

If you would like to check with me that we are aware of any specific circumstances that might have affected your child's progress, please email me at hkhan@klbschool.org.uk .

We are aware, as you may be, that some schools have agreed to revise/lift grades awarded in light of work submitted after schools closed. The guidance from the Department for Education was very clear: students aren't required to complete any additional work to improve their grade. They didn't say it wasn't allowed but advised against it, saying *“Where additional work has been completed after schools and colleges were closed on 20 March, Heads of Centre should exercise caution where that evidence suggests a change in performance. In many cases this is likely to reflect the circumstances and context in which the work is done.”* This is recognising the fact that students will submit work which they claim to be their own, but they could have had help from someone else (e.g. a parent, older sibling, expert of some sort) or used a mark scheme. Clearly, this will provide an unfair advantage.

Once schools submit their grades, checks will be made against each school's previous results using a range of measures. Any school suggesting that their students are doing much better than they have in previous years will have all the submitted results lowered. I doubt many schools will take this risk. We have raised this as a concern with Ofqual.

Results day

It has been confirmed that GCSE results will be released on **Thursday 20 August**, the original date published. Students who feel that their grades from the summer do not reflect their ability will have the opportunity to take their exams in the autumn series or in summer 2021. There is a consultation underway to determine what arrangements might be put in place to allow an effective appeals process. Once this is confirmed, we will let you know. I will write to you again with further details about results day.

Next steps

Even though schools and colleges are closed to the majority of their communities, systems remain in place to advise students and accept applications for courses starting in September 2020. I have outlined below the revised application process for students who have applied to KLB Sixth Form. I would advise students considering alternative institutions to make contact to determine next steps. If at this stage, you would like advice about applying for courses or employment, please contact Mr Pegg, the school's careers adviser (spegg@klbschool.org.uk) and/or Frances Meredith (frances.meredith@prospects.co.uk) who works with KLB, offering impartial careers advice to our students.

Resuming study

For many of you, the next step will involve studying. It will be hard to do this given the sudden end to your GCSE course. Regaining momentum is hard for everyone, particularly students in year 11 and year 13. We are collating a range of super-curricular activities suitable for year 11 students to dip into as they wish. I will email these at the start of next week. For those planning to study A levels and BTEC, whether at KLB or elsewhere, we hope that some of what is offered will whet the appetite and help to restart the learning process.

KLB Sixth Form applicants

The table below outlines the next steps in our application process. At this stage, students who have applied have had confirmation of the option blocks and feedback about their suitability to study the subjects they had specified. In some cases, this led to revised choices.

Date		Notes
w/b 27 April	Super-curricular activities released	See information above. These are optional but we advise that students engage with what is on offer. They will help to confirm interest in the subjects selected.
w/b 27 April – w/b 18 May	Sixth Form interviews	Each applicant would have had a face to face interview with a member of the sixth form team had we been at school. Instead, we will phone and have a 1:1 conversation. This will last about 10 minutes and will provide an opportunity to check that the subjects chosen work well for the student. It will have more of a careers feel to it than a grilling! We will also talk through each student's application form where they had explained why they want to stay at KLB and the qualities they will bring. Where concerns were expressed about suitability, we will explore these. During the interview, we will confirm the grades required for each chosen course and formalise this in a letter posted home. These interviews will stretch over the next five weeks. In order to set up these interviews, we will email parents and students at the start of each week to confirm the day and approximate time when we hope to call. We will work through the year group alphabetically.
w/b 8 June	Transition programme starts	These programmes will be compulsory for all students starting with us in September. Each subject will provide activities which must be completed during term 6 and/or the summer holiday.
Thursday 20 August	GCSE results day	Further details to be announced. We will look at each student's results to see that the grades required (detailed in the letter) have been met.

If you have any questions about any aspects of this letter, including sixth form applications, please email me at hkhan@klbschool.org.uk.

Best wishes

Hannah Khan

Deputy Headteacher/Head of Sixth Form

Headteacher: Tim Rand

Tel: 01453 842227 Fax: 01453 845480 info@klbschool.org.uk www.klbschool.org.uk
KATHARINE LADY BERKELEY'S SCHOOL, WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE, GL12 8RB