

6th May 2020

Dear students, parents and carers

Following the recent consultation, Ofqual have this week released a [statement](#) explaining that Year 10 students due to sit GCSE exams this summer will indeed be able to receive a grade. Obviously, this affects all Lymm High students in Year 10 with respect to English Literature.

Schools have a choice as to whether or not to continue with the exam entries or to withdraw entries so that students sit the exams at a future time. At Lymm High School, we believe that parents and carers ought to make the final decisions, and we will respect whatever you choose to do for your child.

That said, our default position is that all students in Year 10 should remain entered with the exam board and therefore be awarded a grade this summer for English Literature. If we do not hear from you saying otherwise by Friday 15th May, we will keep your child entered with the exam board and they will receive a 'calculated grade' in August. Please do not contact us if you want to continue with the entry.

We cannot see any obvious downside to students receiving grades this summer because they will be allowed to sit the exam at a future date if they are not happy with the grade they are awarded. Crucially, if they do 're-sit' in this way, they would be able to keep whichever of the two grades is the highest. Taking a grade this summer also allows students to maintain the benefit of the early entry in that they will have one fewer GCSE subject to worry about this time next year – and, given the current situation, this will perhaps prove to be even more of an advantage.

For those students who do want to sit the exam in 2021 (regardless of whether or not they receive a grade this summer) then we will ensure that appropriate revision sessions are available – in line with what we would have been doing anyway for those students wanting to re-sit had exams gone ahead as planned. It is impossible to be too specific about what this support might look like at this stage, especially given the uncertainty about when school will re-open. However, there will certainly be lunchtime and after-school revision sessions, plenty of revision materials made available and possibly some weekend/holiday revision days.

There is an indication from Ofqual that there may be an opportunity to sit some GCSE exams in the autumn, although we don't know at this stage whether or not this would include English Literature and/or whether these will be open to current Year 10 students. Given the uncertainty around all of this at the moment, it seems safest to assume this won't be an option, although we will obviously review this as more information becomes available.

The process for calculating grades for Year 10 students this summer will be exactly the same as that for Year 11 students. I shall not repeat all the details here, but you may want to read the following documents, which should answer any questions you might have on this:

- [Ofqual's letter](#) to all GCSE and A' level candidates due to sit exams this summer
- [My letter](#) to Year 11 students, parents and carers from a couple of weeks ago

- A more [detailed document from Ofqual](#) aimed at teachers, students, parents and carers

I would especially like to draw your attention to the following points:

- Whilst schools submit predicted grades to the exam board, these will not necessarily be the same as the grades actually received. The exam boards will scrutinise the information sent by schools to ensure that the distribution of grades looks reasonable and they will make adjustments where necessary.
- We are not allowed to share with students or parents the grades we submit to the exam boards and students will not find out what grade they have been awarded until August. We therefore respectfully ask parents and students to avoid contacting teachers to press individual cases; and to understand that, in such situations, teachers have been instructed not to engage in any discussions. If you feel there is something especially important and unique to an individual's circumstances that the school doesn't already know about, please email Mrs Feast who will consider any information as appropriate.

We have had extensive discussions within school about how to ensure the information we submit to the exam boards is as fair, consistent and robust as it is possible to be. Departments are working very hard at the moment to make their judgements in all subjects for Years 11 and 13, and the same is true of English Literature for Year 10. The process they follow and the conclusions they draw will be monitored very closely by the senior leadership team and, ultimately, by myself.

On a related note, Ofqual has launched a consultation around the exam components for some vocational courses (e.g. Health & Social Care). We will be in touch about this separately in due course.

I trust this provides you with sufficient information for the time being, but please do contact Mrs Feast (efeast@lymmhigh.org.uk) if you have any queries.

Most importantly, if you do not want your Year 10 child to be entered for the English Literature exam and to receive a calculated grade this summer, please let us know by emailing exams@lymmhigh.org.uk before **Friday 15th May. If you do not receive an acknowledgement of your request within 2–3 days, please let Mrs Feast know (efeast@lymmhigh.org.uk). If you do withdraw your child at this stage, they will need to sit the English Literature exams in the summer of 2021 alongside all their other GCSEs.**

Kind regards



Gwyn Williams