

CARRICKFERGUS GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Principal:

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Education Authority - North-Eastern Region

16 April 2020

Dear Parent / Guardian of Year 14 students

I trust that this letter finds you well, and that you are in good health. The entire school community is foremost in my thoughts at this time.

Information about Year 14 summer CCEA modules

This afternoon CCEA published a guidance document for students, parents and teachers with detailed information on the awarding of GCSE, AS and A Level grades this summer. It can be located at the following link: https://ccea.org.uk/downloads/docs/ccea-asset/Examinations/Guidance%20document%20for%20Student%2C%20Parents%20and%20Teachers_4.pdf.

A message to students and families from the Chief Executive of CCEA, Mr Justin Edwards, can be accessed here: https://ccea.org.uk/downloads/docs/ccea-asset/Examinations/A%20message%20to%20students_0.pdf.

I wish to share below a summary of that information with you, and what it will most likely mean for our Year 14 students at Carrickfergus Grammar School.

The A Level grades awarded this summer will be determined based on a model comprising of a range of factors, including the use of centre assessed grades (grades sent to the examination board by school) and rank ordering (a process whereby school ranks students in a subject in potential order within grade boundaries). Further information on centre assessed grades and rank ordering can be found in the above link. Schools are not permitted to disclose centre assessed grades or rank ordering to students, in order to protect the integrity of this unique

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process. The model for determining grades will also include a statistical prediction undertaken by CCEA based on previous student performance. This statistical prediction is similar to the process already used if, for example, a student takes ill and is unable to complete part of a qualification. The combination of statistical prediction, centre assessed grade and rank ordering will identify what CCEA refer to as the 'calculated grade' for each student.

Where students have agreed reasonable adjustments or access arrangements, such as a reader or scribe, judgements on centre assessed grades should take account of likely achievement with the reasonable adjustment / access arrangement in place.

Special consideration requests will not apply this summer due to the fact that exams are not taking place. Instead, judgements will reflect how students would have performed under ordinary circumstances. Where illness or other personal circumstances might have affected performance in mock examinations, schools have been asked to bear that in mind when making their judgements.

Students will be made aware of their A2 grades no later than the planned date for the publication of A2 results which is Thursday 13th August 2020.

CCEA is currently considering what arrangements might be put in place for an appeals process, as normal arrangements for the review of marking and appeals cannot apply. Students who feel that their grades from this summer do not reflect their ability will at any rate be able to sit examinations at the next available opportunity. For A2 modules, this will most likely be in the first half of 2021. If a student sits A2 modules next year and does worse than the calculated grade they receive in August 2020, the calculated grade (the higher grade) will still stand.

Staff at school will now take some time to reflect and consult with each other on this afternoon's guidance from CCEA, and I would hope to be in a position to write to you again next week. Carrickfergus Grammar School emphasises its total commitment to working productively in partnership with students and parents at this critical time.

School would like our Year 14 students to continue to engage and work through the material and resources assigned to them via the Google classrooms for a while after Easter. This is so that we can be absolutely sure that we have completed the A2 Programmes of Study in their entirety, in the interests of your child's anticipated pathway next year. We also believe that the continued structure which this offers will be beneficial to them in a time of lockdown. We intend to communicate with you further about the completion of Programmes of Study in early May.

Communication

As we approach the start of the summer term, may I remind you of various communication channels the school has in place to support and assist you and your child as far as possible.

Information and updates regarding individual subjects will be posted in the respective Google Classrooms.

Parents can contact the school as usual via the school phone line on 028 93 363615 during the day or the additional number of 07395930976. The general school e-mail account is info@carrickfergusgrammar.carrickfergus.ni.sch.uk . Any general Google Classroom issues can be addressed by forwarding the query to kcrooks461@c2kni.net . Safeguarding issues will be dealt with as a matter of urgency. These, and any other pastoral issues, may be addressed by contacting lkane502@c2kni.net .

The school community is also asked to check the school website on a regular basis for further updates.

In Summary:

Tel: 028 93 363615 // 07395930976

Email:

General: info@carrickfergusgrammar.carrickfergus.ni.sch.uk

Google Classroom / IT: kcrooks461@c2kni.net

Pastoral / Safeguarding: lkane502@c2kni.net

Website: www.carrickfergusgrammar.com

Conclusion

Finally, may I thank you as parents for your tremendous support. I appreciate that for many students, the opportunity not to sit A2 modules this summer following much hard work and endeavour throughout the year may be disappointing and frustrating. I am confident, however, that the exam board will do everything possible to ensure that final A Level grades awarded this year are fair, and totally reflective of the hard work and commitment manifested by our fine students. Do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries, concerns or issues.

Stay Safe

J. A. Maxwell
Principal

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