

Our Ref: SHS/DKP/LRS

12 October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

You will have received an email outlining a mock exam timetable for the beginning of November.

As outlined in the accompanying letter, we do not want these assessments to be a cause of stress and anxiety for your child.

These assessments will provide us with an indication of how your child is doing at the moment; they are not full-scale mock exams and most students will only have one paper in their normal classrooms.

Due to lockdown some students have not yet been assessed for access arrangements. We are working hard to assess all the students before their formal mock examinations in February, but in the interests of fairness and because of the restrictions we have due to social distancing measures, we will not be able to provide the full suite of access arrangements to students in the assessments in November. Where possible we will utilise technology to support students but it will not be possible to provide extra-time, a scribe or human-reader.

All teachers are fully aware of which students are entitled to additional support in their GCSE exams, and will take this information into account when marking the students work as they did when calculating centre-assessed grades in the Summer.

Last Year 11's grading process taught us that we need a greater body of evidence when it comes to the effect of access arrangements. 25% extra time does not necessarily translate into 25% more marks and therefore we need evidence of how a student's outcomes improve when they are provided with access arrangements compared to without them.

Therefore, not necessarily being able to grant all access arrangements during these lean mocks will offer evidence which will allow teachers to favourably consider their effect. We hope that this reassures you and your child that students will not be penalised by not having access arrangements granted, but it actually rather puts us in a stronger position in terms of evidence collection.

We are invested in your child's progress as much as you are and we trust that you will support us in supporting your child by treating these short mocks as calmly as possible. Mocks are only ever the performance on any given day. This year's grading process asked us to holistically judge a student's performance (not ability) over the duration of the course. This allowed teachers to disregard poor mocks if classwork had been consistently good. In short, the more positive evidence we have the better and these short mocks without all access arrangements will provide immensely useful evidence for your child.

Yours sincerely

Miss S Hughes

Miss S Hughes
Assistant Headteacher