

7th April 2020

Dear Year 11 students, parents/carers

I wanted to provide you with an update on the current situation with qualifications, as well as hoodies and the yearbook.

GCSE qualifications:

On Friday, the government issued more clarity on how grades for qualifications will be awarded to Y11 students. You can read their letter to students here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/877830/Letter_to_students_-_Summer_2020_grading.pdf

As anticipated, this process will start with the school providing exam boards with estimates of the grades we think students would have achieved if they had the opportunity to sit the exams in the summer. We will also be expected to rank order students in each subject within each grade boundary.

To do this, teachers will use a range of information including mock exam grades, historical knowledge of pupils and coursework to make this judgement. The estimates we provide the exam boards will be honest and evidence based. The exam board will then use a host of statistical formulas to create a final grade. This process will ensure that the distribution of grades across the country remains the same as previous years. If the exam boards didn't do this then schools with less integrity than Nova may be tempted to award unfair grades to all students.

As a result of this process requiring us to take a more holistic approach to assessment, we won't be publishing reports from PPE3 this academic year. Please do not ask your teachers to tell you what grade they have estimated you as we have been instructed by the Department for Education not to do so.

I know many students are currently working on coursework or portfolio work in a range of GCSE subjects. It is important that you know that this work cannot now be used by teachers to estimate grades. For many of you this will be a huge disappointment. However, it is important that you know this immediately so that you do not continue to work in the belief that the work you are doing will be considered by your teachers when estimating grades. We directed students to continue doing this as we didn't know previously whether this might be usable. Unfortunately, it will not. For students in this position, I can only state again that it was wise to continue to work on these pieces given the information we all had to hand last week.

The above process only applies to GCSE. Further information will follow regarding the awarding of grades in vocational qualifications such as BTECs.

As a school, we are digesting this information ourselves and will do our best to support our students through this time where they need us.

I'm sure many students and parents will be asking what can they do now that is useful.



Our first advice would be to maintain the knowledge and skills students have learnt in each subject area in case they may wish to appeal their awarded grade by sitting a so called 'appeal exam' in the autumn.

Students should also prepare for the next stage of their education or training in any way possible. Nova is looking to offer help and guidance as soon as possible after the Easter break on ideas that could help you to achieve this.

It is important that students never forget what they have learned. It is the knowledge and skills that will long stay with them and help them to take their next steps in the world. Nobody can take this away from them and they have worked hard to be where they are. The grades students are awarded this summer will have the same value as those students who went before and those students that will go afterwards. Students' grades will gain them access to Sixth Form, college, university and apprenticeships. All I ask is that wherever our students go next, they work as hard as they can to be the best they can be.

Leavers' Hoodies

We are now able to offer Year 11 the opportunity to purchase both hoodies and a yearbook if they would like. We are fully aware that as a year group you have missed out on the normal rites of passage such as a leavers assembly so, as we've said before, we want to make sure that you have the opportunity to remember your 5 years at Nova with fondness and, at a later date, laughter.

The hoodies are available from the following website: <https://www.leavershoodies.com/shop/novahreod-2020> They come in 3 different size ranges and a vast array of colours. Please order direct from the website. The instructions are straight forward. Delivery will now go directly to you rather than the school so that you can get the hoodies as swiftly as possible. Also, in contrast to normal, all correspondence will be through the company as the transaction will be between yourselves and them. We have set a deadline for ordering the hoodies of 10th May. This means that the company have 6-8 weeks to make the hoodies and then deliver them.

Year 11 Yearbook

Miss Dominy and Mrs Moore have worked with a core of Year 11 students to begin to create a yearbook for the rest of the year group.

The yearbook will contain around 30 pages with pictures and messages from all students, memory pages, teacher messages, tutor messages, message from the head boy and head girl, and many other treasures from the last 5 years.

To complete the yearbook, we wanted to ask a number of questions that would support us creating an artefact that you will value and tell the story of your five years at Nova accurately. If students could please use the link below for office forms and then click submit, we can add more of the students' ideas to the yearbook.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=0BLA3a7O-EqFk3mzDwznCBvhSIhmA9EvdEsvi9dg01UMjNPREDJLMlo1UTg3VUE1MEWYSUQ4Ty4u>

I look forward to seeing the responses to the form and the number of orders for the hoodies increase over the coming weeks. Please do not hesitate to contact me if there are any issues.

More information will follow in time, including further details about celebratory events. For now though, I hope you are able to take time to simply stay safe and look after those closest to you.

Yours sincerely,



Nick Wells
Headteacher