



EMMANUEL COLLEGE
Emmanuel Schools Foundation

To all students in Year 11

23 March 2020

Dear

You will have heard over the weekend that public examinations for this year have been cancelled. While some students will have been relieved, for many this represents a disappointing situation where you won't be able to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding in the way you were expecting. I know that many of you are also really disappointed that you will not be able to experience the leavers' events as other year groups have done.

There are two issues that must be on your mind at present. Firstly, what GCSE grades will I get and secondly, what do I do now with my time? While it is probably too early in this process to provide a definitive answer to all of your questions, I hope my answers here will be of use to you. It might be that you have further questions. Can I ask you to put these in an email to exams@emmanuelctc.org.uk and we will endeavour to get back to you with answers within a few days.

Are all exams cancelled?

Yes. Exams are definitely cancelled. No papers will be issued this summer and no centre will be able to run exams. Even if things improve in terms of the COVID-19 situation, exams will not go ahead this summer.

How will grades be awarded now?

The government has stated that *"the calculated grade process will take into account a range of evidence including, for example, non-exam assessment and mock results, and the approach will be standardised between schools and colleges"*. We don't know the details of this process at this time but will of course, do all in our power to ensure that it is as fair as possible. We do know that it will be more complicated than students just getting their predicted grades. The government has said that *"we know that simply using predicted grades would not be fair to all students. The calculated grade will take into account teachers' assessment of the likely grade as well as other factors such as prior attainment, so students' final grades will not necessarily reflect their predicted grades."*

What should I do now?

It may be the case that in the future, you will want to re-sit a GCSE exam in one or more of the subjects that you are taking. There is no harm in doing the work you have with you, including completing past papers or finishing essay tasks. Reading is always a great way to learn and grow intellectually so if you do nothing else, read! However, we think it is reasonable at this stage for you to stop working with the same intensity on revision as you would have been doing. In the next few days we shall be contacting you to explore how we can support you to think about sixth form options and how you might use the time you have to prepare academically for the future. However, using the time that you have now productively is really important. Why not help out practically in the home by cleaning, making food or looking after siblings. In addition, keep in touch with family and friends who are self-isolating or keeping their distance; older relatives will really appreciate you taking the time to call on the phone or over Skype.

What about my coursework?

At this stage, we're advising that you don't need to do any more work on coursework or practical elements. The government has said that the calculated grade process will take into account non-exam assessment but we don't know yet how this will be used. They have also said that exam boards will provide advice on this to schools and colleges as soon as possible. You definitely must not throw anything away and if your coursework is practical in nature, such as in music, you should keep up practice as much as possible.

When will I know my grades?

We think these will be confirmed by the end of July but of course, it might be later. Just like normal, you will have to get used to waiting for results. The best approach is to try not to think too much about it - there is nothing you can do now about it.

How will sixth form admissions work?

It is likely that that we will run a process for Sixth Form admissions in the summer as we usually do. We will, as we always do, want to make sure you are choosing the right courses and the right place to study. However, we will also be sensible and flexible this year as we consider entry requirements for particular courses. This doesn't mean we will be removing entry requirements but rather that we may be flexible for students who have missed the entry criteria but can demonstrate their aptitude for a particular course. We may use a short additional assessment to help with this.

I heard that you can appeal a grade or sit exams in the autumn, is that right?

If a student does not believe the correct process has been followed in their case, they will be able to appeal on that basis. In addition, if they do not feel their calculated grade reflects their performance, they will have the opportunity to sit an exam, as soon as is reasonably possible after schools and colleges open again. Students will also have the option to sit their exams in summer 2021.

Will there be anything for Year 11 leavers?

We'd love to put something on for you all as a year group. I think the best option is to wait and see how things develop and then plan something later on when we know where we stand with social distancing restrictions. Once we have clarity on this we'll consult with the year group about what is best.

Can I come in to school and work until the summer?

No. The government has been very clear that we must take every step possible to keep physical distance at this time.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Waterfield
Principal