



April 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to update you regarding the decisions we are making about this year's public examinations for Year 10. After careful consideration, the Academy has made the decision NOT to enter Year 10 for any of their examinations this year and, as a result, students will not choose a final option to study throughout Year 11. I will explain our rationale for this decision below.

The Academy first closed due to a national lockdown on Friday 20 March 2020, reopening at the beginning of September 2020 – a period of 14 school weeks. In addition to this, we closed again, due to a further lockdown, on Tuesday 5 January 2021 until 8 March 2021 – a period of 8 school weeks. As a result of these lockdowns, students have missed a combined 22 school weeks of their GCSE option A and B qualifications (along with the disruption the lockdowns have caused to teaching timetables).

We believe, therefore, that it would be more beneficial to finish the two qualifications that students were due to complete this year, during the next academic year. This will allow students to secure possibly higher grades than they could be awarded through an evidence-based teacher assessment. In all likelihood, Year 10 students would receive lower grades this year if we were to do the latter. Furthermore, students have worked extremely hard on their GCSE courses and deserve to receive grades through their own hard work and not based on their current grades, which have been affected by the 22 weeks of lost learning brought about by national Covid lockdowns.

Just as importantly, our proposal that we do not enter Year 10 students for GCSE exams this year will mean students have additional time (if appropriate and they require it) to make up lost learning in the core subjects of English, maths and science, as well as their other GCSE subjects.

As I am sure you will appreciate, this is a very complex situation and the Academy has spent a considerable amount of time considering the best way forward for students in Year 10, which will provide them with the best chance of success in Year 11. Please rest assured, we will continue to support our students and offer them the dedication and resources they require from us to achieve the results they deserve.

I know this has been a time of great worry for you and your children and that there has been anxiety about how the last year may affect exams and results. We will continue to provide students and parents with information about decisions we make regarding exams. However, in the meantime, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me by emailing: info@appletonacademy.co.uk.

Yours faithfully

Diane Whitehead
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Secondary Achievement and Standards