



Barr Beacon School
www.barrbeaconschool.co.uk

Our Ref: LD/cc/DLE/ExamsUpdate

7th January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

The government has confirmed that exams for GCSEs and A levels are definitely not going ahead and “a form of teacher-assessed grades” would take their place.

Here is the relevant section from the Secretary of State’s full [speech](#) to parliament:

“I can confirm that GCSEs and A and AS Level exams will not go ahead this summer. This year we are going to put our trust in teachers rather than algorithms.

“The department and [government exams watchdog] Ofqual had already worked up a range of contingency options. While the details will need to be fine-tuned in consultation with Ofqual, the exam boards and teaching representatives, I can confirm now that I wish to use a form of teacher-assessed grades, with training and support provided to ensure these are awarded fairly and consistently.”

The same information was also related in a subsequent [press release](#).

Beyond what has been announced publicly, we do not know any detail about how grading will happen. If it turns out to be anything like last year’s process we will need to use all forms of evidence available to us to inform the grades: classwork, homework, effort, mock exam grades and anything else which helps us to form a rich picture of each child’s likely achievement. Therefore, it is vital that pupils continue to work hard and do all their teachers ask of them.

It is wonderful that the vast majority of pupils have been attending their online lessons and engaged with the extensive remote learning provided. We are making phone calls home for anyone who is not.

Mock exams will continue in March as planned, as long as it is safe to do so.

For pupils taking BTEC qualifications: On Tuesday night, an announcement was made which you can read in full [here](#). In brief, things are still unclear. More information about future BTEC exams and how pupils will be assessed for their BTEC qualifications is yet to emerge and we will review our decision regarding upcoming BTEC exams when this information is released. In your child’s online lessons we will be focussing on continuing to deliver the content for their BTEC components and collecting as much assessment information as possible to support our understanding of the progress that pupils are making.

As soon as we know more, we will be in touch with a further update.

Yours sincerely

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Headteacher



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