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Dear students, parents and carers

Special Consideration Arrangements for Final Examinations 2022

I write to you with an update regarding arrangements for the upcoming summer examinations. On April 8th 2022 JCQ released the guidance for special consideration for examinations this summer. The full document and guidance can be found on the following link alongside a government blog:

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/A-guide-to-the-special-consideration-process-202122-%E2%80%93-General-and-Vocational-qualifications-Updated-8-April-2022.pdf>

<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2022/04/12/everything-you-need-to-know-about-covid-measures-during-exams-this-summer/>

As outlined in the documentation from JCQ, due to the exceptional circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic awarding bodies have clarified procedures for students who are absent from a final examination. Special consideration procedures have been put in place for students who have an 'acceptable absence' and the guidance from JCQ is very clear about what will constitute acceptable reasons for absence:

- *'Candidates must be reminded that the awarding of a grade through the special consideration process can only be made where they are absent from an examination or non-examination assessment component for an acceptable reason. A candidate who is staying at home and avoiding contact with others, in line with UKHSA guidance, at the time of the examination, is considered to be absent from the examination for an acceptable reason.'*

The updated COVID-19 absence guidance for students is as follows:

- Children and young people with mild symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, who are otherwise well, can continue to attend their education setting.
- Children and young people who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home and avoid contact with other people, where they can. They can go back to school, college or childcare, and resume normal activities when they no longer have a high temperature and they are well enough to attend.
- If a child or young person has a positive COVID-19 test result they should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test, if they can.
- Children and young people who usually go to school, college or childcare and who live with someone who has a positive COVID-19 test result should continue to attend as normal.

Examination boards have spaced out exams this year to ensure there is a 10-day gap in between papers for each subject; this has been done to ensure students who are isolating can still complete components of their exams. This is essential as grading through special consideration will be dependent upon a certain percentage of papers for individual subjects being completed. Examination boards will award a grade where eligible candidates (candidates who have been prepared for and studied the entire course) are absent for an acceptable reason, such as COVID-19, and have completed the assessment(s) for at least one whole component within the specification. This completion criteria are outlined below for all GCSE courses. Please note the final bullet point – grades will not be awarded for subjects where none of the components have been completed.

- GCSE (AQA, OCR, Pearson and WJEC specifications): 25% of the total assessment must have been completed.
- As in all previous standard examination series, a qualification award will not be made where none of the examinations/assessments within a specification have been completed.

Members of the School Leadership Team will be responsible for signing off special consideration applications for absent students. Families will also be responsible for signing off the relevant documentation, therefore, it is absolutely essential that you notify school as soon as possible to a potential absence. It must be noted that grading decisions will be taken exclusively by examination boards at the point of award and school will not be able to influence those decisions in any way. Alongside this schools have been advised by JCQ to report through the malpractice procedure any issues where we have reasons to suspect the authenticity of the details provided for special consideration.

We hope that the examination season runs smoothly and without incident, however, it is important for families to be fully furnished with the information to support them should the need arise. Please do use the exams@bradfield.sheffield.sch.uk email address if you have any questions about these arrangements or indeed the final exams.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adrian May', with a stylized flourish underneath.

Adrian May- Headteacher