

**11<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

Dear Parent / Carer,

I hope I find you and your household safe and well. Can I firstly thank you for your support in ensuring all students are accessing our online learning provision. We appreciate the challenge this presents but have been impressed how quickly you have been able to ensure the Y11s are engaging.

Last week the government outlined initial details of how grades will be awarded to students taking GCSEs this summer. No doubt there will be further developments as we progress towards the end of your child's time at Don Valley Academy, but at this stage I wanted to assure you that we are doing all we can to ensure all students receive a set of qualifications which will allow them to move forward with the next steps in their education, training or employment. This week has seen a number of key developments and we wanted communicate some key issues with you.

#### **January and February Examinations**

For your information, the decision has been taken to withdraw all students from any scheduled examinations in January and February. Therefore, if your child was expecting to sit examinations in **Music or Health and Social Care** these **will not** go ahead. You can be confident this will have no impact upon final grades and exam boards have assured us that no child will be disadvantaged as a result.

#### **GCSE Grades – Summer 2021**

It has been announced that summer examinations will not go ahead in their traditional format and will be based upon centre assessed grades issued by teaching staff. We have been informed that further details around this will be released and that the Department for Education is now working with OFQUAL, England's exam regulator, to consult on how students' grades will be awarded.

#### **Remote Learning**

It is really important therefore that your child is accessing remote learning from home during this period of lockdown. This will be a critical part of the process for allocating students' grades in the summer. It is now highly likely we will be using teacher assessments (Centre assessed grades) which will be based on evidence from a range of sources linked to in school performance. Engagement with all aspects of remote learning (live lessons, Hegarty Maths, GCSEPod etc), will be one element, with other elements likely to be further assessments/internal examinations being issued upon your child's return to school. As ever, we will do all we can to support students, but I must stress that engagement during this period of lockdown is essential. If you require support with ICT please do not hesitate to contact Mr Wallace by email [Wallacek@donvalleyacademy.org.uk](mailto:Wallacek@donvalleyacademy.org.uk).

#### **Applications for Colleges and courses after Year 11**

Many of you are investigating and in a lot of cases already applying for courses at college. You will need to keep a close eye on application deadlines this year as there have been many changes as a result of the pandemic and lockdowns. Mrs Green, Careers Advisor, will continue to make appointments during the lockdown period either

via a phone call or using Microsoft Teams. Mrs Green will also be creating a weekly update with important updates, information about open evenings, and application deadlines, which your teachers will show you at the beginning of your lesson every Thursday. If you have any specific questions, please do not hesitate contact us via email using the email addresses below.

**Our contact details are:**

Mrs Green (Careers Advisor) – [Helen.Green@deltatrust.org.uk](mailto:Helen.Green@deltatrust.org.uk)

Mr Staniforth (Associate Vice Principal) – [Staniforth12@donvalleyacademy.org.uk](mailto:Staniforth12@donvalleyacademy.org.uk)


Mr Hay (Associate Assistant Principal - Careers) – [Haya5@donvalleyacademy.org.uk](mailto:Haya5@donvalleyacademy.org.uk)

Mr Wallace (Learning Manager - Year 11) - [Wallacek@donvalleyacademy.org.uk](mailto:Wallacek@donvalleyacademy.org.uk)

I hope this gives answers to some of the questions you may have at this stage. As soon as further updates are available, we will contact you. Although the circumstances this year may be different, we will do all we can to ensure that everyone achieves the grades needed for their next steps in life, and we look forward to celebrating success together at the very earliest opportunity.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,



**Mrs H. Thornton**  
**Principal**