

6th January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Cambridge National/Technical Exams – January Series

While Summer examinations have been cancelled, the Government has said that vocational examinations planned for this month can go ahead if schools wish to offer them.

After careful consideration I have decided that the exams will run as planned while respecting that students, parents and carers have the right to make an individual and informed decision as to whether their child will attend school to take the examinations. This will obviously be a relief to some students and a disappointment to others. Students who have been working hard towards the exams have the right to complete the examinations if they wish, but equally might decide they do not wish to attend the academy in the current circumstances.

Detailed arrangements have been made in school to reduce the health risks of taking the exams and the academy is open at the moment for a relatively small number who are the children of critical workers, alternative provision and vulnerable children.

Summer examinations have been cancelled and the government will soon announce how it intends that grades will be calculated for these and how any teacher assessments or exams already taken might be used towards these grades.

The exam board have published information confirming the following:

“Where a school decides to offer exams, you will be able to sit your assessments as planned and if your school or college decides not to offer vocational exams, we have agreed the following to ensure that no learner is disadvantaged.”

“We will award a grade for any learner who is unable to take their exams and has enough evidence to receive a certificate that they need for progression.”

“Learners unable to take their assessment this January may be able to take their assessment at a later date. If that is not possible, we will put in place arrangements to ensure you are not disadvantaged.”

In light of all of the above, taking or not taking these exams is expected to form only part of the overall process for awarding a grade. This is of course always the case since examinations take place throughout the duration of the course, typically with resit opportunities and in the majority of courses; coursework also contributes to the final grade in normal circumstances.

I hope that this information will enable students and parents/carers to make a choice on whether it is in the interests of their child for them to attend school and complete the vocational exams.

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Understandably, students who are unwell, self-isolating or who have tested positive for coronavirus should not attend school. The academy will contact you by phone on Thursday 7th January to discuss your choice with regard to attending the examination.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Barr', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Andrew Barr
Principal