5th March 2021

Summer Exams - Student/Parent Update Friday 5th March

Dear parents and students

This is the college position at 5th March 2021.

We are still awaiting final clarification from the Exam boards on the specific evidence sources for each subject area. We will inform you of these when they are received but we have been told that it may be the end of term (Easter) before they are released in their final and full versions.

Hopefully you are all aware that 2021 students (Y13) in their final year of qualifications will be awarded a grade by teacher assessment of the standard that you are performing at

We will not have a set of formal internal exams at Carmel, but will be using a broad range of evidence where a student has demonstrated/is able to demonstrate their understanding and skills to the best of their ability.

We will send out an overview of the process to be used this year to award students their final teacher assessed grade (TAG) in each subject w/c March 29th. This is when we hope to have received the final set of information from Exam boards.

As I have outlined above, the Exam boards are currently collating for each subject recommended evidence that should be used to determine your grade this year.

I would like to address and tackle some of the, quite frankly, rubbish that you have may have read in the papers and on social media. Journalists and influencers need ‘clicks’ on their articles so often write headlines and posts that are sensational and alarming – ‘Exams system unfair’, ‘schools and colleges in chaos’, ‘get ready for huge grade inflation’, or ‘The lost generation’

I am very happy and confident with the approach that we will manage on your behalf. As I have previously stated the college managed this last year and I am expecting our 34th set of Year 13’s to once again produce an outstanding set of results, just like the previous 33 years.

Every Carmel student stands to benefit from this approach and you will all have the chance and potential to perform better under these arrangements than you may have done under an external exam process – hopefully it will be a lot less stressful in what has been a challenging sixth form journey for you all.
Key questions you may be thinking and want to ask

Will the system be fair? Will Carmel be more generous or more harsh than other colleges?

- any difference will be marginal
- All schools and colleges follow same guidance - we like many schools and colleges will also be undertaking moderation with peers
- All schools and colleges are subject to the same quality assurance – both internally and externally

Every year teachers decide and set final grades for coursework, NEA, practical work and in subjects such as BTEC the majority of the grade is set by teachers. Nobody has been shouting about this and all schools and colleges are annually checked on the accuracy and fairness of this type of assessment

We are just applying this process on a wider scale this year.

As a large and high performing centre, we regularly have our systems of marking and awarding scrutinised externally

- Judgements will be evidenced based in each subject and for every student

The only thing that counts in deciding your grade is the quality of work you have completed so far and will still have opportunity to produce

RIGHTS:

What protections do I have in this process?

- Before we set the grades, you can tell us about relevant context
- After you receive results in August you can appeal and/or sit an exam in October.
  - To college to check we didn’t make an error
  - To exam boards - they will review the college evidence base

*NB Remember results can go up or down on appeal*

Please tell us of any problems and challenges you have faced – many of the appeals we had last year were when students retrospectively told us about problems after the year was over and grades submitted.

Again, we are given guidelines and direction from the exam boards around how much adjustment we are able to make.

This is really important for any student that has already arrangements in place for support around assessment such as extra time or a reader. We have already started to make sure we have identified you all, and staff have of course, in the majority of cases been making such adjustments for example when we have not been able to provide extra time during in class test.
Although this system of TAGs, as I have explained is not really new, as a PE teacher I have been awarding grades in GCSE, A level and BTEC for over 30 years. It is different, but it is interesting to note that the global education systems that are often referred to as the best in the work such as Finland and South Korea use this Teacher Assessed Grade approach.

This year’s compromise is an excellent alternative for where we are and especially in an outstanding college like Carmel we are well placed to help you make the most of this approach.

In conclusion: keep going with your college work, take up the option of taking a Covid test in college to help us keep Carmel fully open to all our students, attend all your remaining lessons, follow teacher instructions and ask questions, and keep an eye out for regular updates.

Best wishes

Mike Hill
Principal
**Suggested Timeline for Carmel College**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>w/c March 1st – 29th March</strong></td>
<td>College subjects start to determining the assessments &amp; evidence that grading will be based on. Each department to complete an Agreed Sources of Evidence form.</td>
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| w/c March 29th              | Assessment & evidence:  
  - Communication with students  
  - Remaining assessments commence  
  - Teachers to compile and to set, assess, mark and record student submissions. |
| March 29th – May 21st       | College start to check and moderate the sources of evidence collated for student assessment in determining final teacher assessed grade.               |
| April 21st                  | Consultation with student/parents (Review 3).                                                                                                   |
| May 17th – May 21st         | Curriculum leaders and Heads of Department to sign off teacher sources of evidence for assessment and final teacher assessed grade decisions.  
  An internal Quality Assurance to commence by College management team with external scrutiny/moderation. |
| May 21st – 24th             | Assessment closes  
  Final grades uploaded to internal system via Mapp 9  
  College management team to monitor and QA completion of process. |
| **Half Term Holiday**       |                                                                                                                                                |
| w/c June 7th – June 18th   | MIS/Exams Quality Assurance and accuracy checking & submission of grades to Exam Boards starts.                                                                 |
| w/c June 13th – June 18th  | Head of Centre declarations are completed and final sets of grades submitted to exam boards.                                                                |
| Private candidates (as appropriate to be subject to these deadlines) | Private candidates should work with a centre to produce evidence in line with the type of evidence that other students will produce. |