

Please find following an update about home learning and news received so far from the WJEC and Qualifications Wales:

Home Learning:

Most importantly I'd like to make a point of thanking all of you for the way in which you have encouraged students to engage in the home learning programme. Parents, students and staff have been keeping us updated on how well pupils are approaching their remote learning. Directors of Standards from several subjects across the school are updating me regularly on how positively pupils are responding, and just how busy they are all at home. Thank you.

There have been one or two queries which I can clarify about what work students should prioritise, particularly if a subject has more than one Google Classroom. I have clarified with all Directors of Standards that pupils' direct route to the priority work they should do is via the Google Classroom page for their class, rather than any group drives. It may be the case once or twice that there is work on a larger group drive that teachers want pupils to look at, if this is the case they should be directed to that by their class teacher via the class drive. In short, go to the individual teacher's class drive first, then the website, or larger group drives if additional or supplementary work is needed.

Linking to this, a few parents have queried that there seems to be a lot of work and they aren't sure what to prioritise. I think the simplest way to approach this is follow the advice we have given to staff and pupils in school, which is to follow your daily timetable as much as possible. E.G, if you have English first lesson, log in to the English classroom for your teacher and see what they have set.

Finally, just as we are asking all staff, can pupils regularly check their emails. Google Drive updates will appear in their bassalegschool email.

I will be sure to keep in touch with updates as necessary.

Updates on Exams from WJEC and Qualifications Wales:

I know this is an area which is a huge concern for a lot of pupils and parents. We do not yet have final details from either the exam board (WJEC) or the body that oversees their work (Qualifications Wales), but we do have updates which I feel are important to share with you all.

This is what we have been told so far as a school:

- Grades will be awarded for all GCSE and A Level Courses that were due to be completed this summer. This includes any GCSEs that Year 10 were sitting which were due to be finished this summer, such as English Literature.
- Grades will be awarded based on teacher assessment. Meaning that staff will be asked to upload a grade based on a range of evidence that we have gathered.

- The grades we upload will be a final course grade, rather than a combination of grades from any outstanding units, such as separate exams or Controlled Assessments
- Importantly, the teacher assessment grades must be based on a range of evidence: a combination of work done in test conditions, work that has been observed in class by teachers, and any elements of the course that have been completed. This means that the teacher assessed grades will not be taken directly from mock exams or from completed Controlled Assessments, though those elements will be a contributing factor.
- It has been made clear that the teacher assessed grade cannot simply be a target or predicted grade, though the work that staff have considered to set predicted grades on reports will also contribute to the teacher assessed grade.
- Also importantly, the exam board have made it clear that the teacher assessed grades will be 'standardised across the cohort,' meaning that they will have to weigh the grades we upload with the grades that all other schools in Wales upload, just as they would with exam papers. This means that in some cases pupils may be awarded a different grade to the one that is submitted as teacher assessment.

We are waiting for clarification on the awarding of several other elements that pupils are sitting:

- We have not yet been guided on what will happen to courses where pupils are sitting a unit exam in the summer, such as Year 10 Science, but not completing the qualification; we are waiting for clarification on what will happen with AS levels; and we are waiting for clarification on the awarding of non-GCSE courses such as the Skills Challenge or BTECs

I know this will not answer all of your questions on what is a difficult subject, but hopefully it will answer a few. I am working closely with our exams officer to keep up to date with developments and will share as soon as I know. We know that the finer details of teacher assessment will not be issued until April.

In the meantime please can I ask you to continue to be patient. And while I know you are in touch with classroom teachers and may feel tempted to ask them about teacher assessments for individual pupils, unfortunately they won't be in a position to offer any more help, as we are all waiting for further guidance.

As always, thanks everyone for your support

Mr M Maughan
Deputy Headteacher
Bassaleg School