



3rd October 2013

Dear Parent/Carer,

GCSE English:- November Entry

We are approaching the date for finalising candidate entry for the November GCSE English Language examination. As you will be aware, we made the initial decision to enter all students for the November examination series as a result of the government's mid-course decision to remove the speaking and listening component from the overall assessment in the June examination. We took this course of action in order to maximise students' achievement in the subject and ensure that no student was disadvantaged by this previously unannounced mid-course change to assessment.

Given that we have completed controlled assessments for all students, we are now in the process of reviewing the performance of students in our cohort and we can now make a refined decision on which students would benefit from early entry rather than placing the whole cohort under the strain of an additional examination. Decisions on student entry will be based on a review of the completed speaking and listening assessments, the completed written controlled assessments and the results of a mock examination we intend to hold next Friday morning. Through analysing this information, we will identify those students who are most likely reach their optimum performance in the November and, conversely, those students who would be better served by delaying the entry until June.

As I am sure you will appreciate, we will always look to act in the best interests of all students. We made a swift response in July to a highly unusual and potentially damaging change to GCSE assessment. In announcing our initial decision we sought to ensure that all students were prepared for a November entry, should this be in their best interests. We are now able to identify which students are in this category and, as a consequence, who we will enter for the examination in November. We are also now able to identify which candidates would benefit from additional time to work on controlled assessment, improving their English skills and developing their exam technique. These students would be most likely to reach their optimum performance in the June examination and would be best served by avoiding the stress and pressure of an additional external examination in November hence they will only be entered for the June examination.

The final decision on which students will be entered for the November examination will be communicated to students following individual discussions with English staff. These will take place during week commencing the 14th October after the results of the mock examination are known.

Please be assured that we will continue to offer the best teaching, support, advice and guidance in these unusual circumstances.

Yours faithfully,

Ms L Savage
Headteacher