



24 March 2020

Dear Sixth Form Applicant,

At this time of uncertainty, we understand that you are anxious about what is going to happen with your GCSEs, and about your places in Sixth Form in September. Although the situation is still developing from day to day, we would like to give you as much reassurance as we can (on the understanding, of course, that events may overtake us, particularly when it comes to dates and timings).

First, we have been assured by the government that progression to Sixth Form and to university will go ahead as planned, and we fully intend to enrol a new Year 12 cohort for the new academic year in the autumn. Currently, we anticipate this happening roughly at the same time as planned, so with enrolment at the same time as GCSE results in late August. The exact date is of course still uncertain, but we will be in touch with firm plans as soon as we are able to. The planned taster days in late June are uncertain at the minute, but if it is possible to run them, we will do so, and let you know in good time.

We will honour all of the offers we have already made. Clearly, these are still conditional and we need to be fair to all our applicants, so places are still dependent on the GCSE grades you will be awarded (more on this later), but we are confident all offer holders will be treated fairly and are optimistic we will be able to enrol students as normal.

Our priority for allocating places remains unchanged:

- In the event of more students, who meet the entry requirements, enrolling than we have space for, priority goes to those who applied on time.
- As a final tie-break, we look at the straight line distance from the academy, with the closest students getting priority, which is in line with the academy's published admissions criteria.
- Offers will be valid until the end of enrolment day; if there is a reason why you cannot make it to the academy, it is possible to enrol virtually; more details on this closer to the time.
- It is unlikely we will need to use the distance criteria, and we will do our absolute best to make space for every student who wants KAA6 and has the necessary grades.
- Enrolment will of course depend on subject choices, so we will be 'full' in the most popular subjects relatively quickly, whereas in shortage subjects, we are likely to be able to find space even after enrolment day.

This of course leads to the question which will be at the top of everyone's list of concerns: how will GCSEs be awarded? We don't have the details yet, and I'm sure your schools have been keeping you up-to-date with the advice coming from the Department for Education, but we know that 'calculated grades' will be awarded, based on teacher assessments and taking account of a range of evidence, including progress students would normally make between March and the exams. These will then be moderated by exam boards. You will be able to appeal the grades awarded if you feel they are unfair, and to sit an exam early in the new academic year if you still feel you should have done better. The exact process for awarding grades is not yet clear, but I am confident that your schools will ensure you get the credit for the hard work you have done, and the exam boards will ensure they are fair.



Here is the full announcement from last Friday: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/further-details-on-exams-and-grades-announced>

Please be assured that we will do everything we can to ensure that your long-term education is not affected, and that you will be able to start your A-Level studies as planned in the autumn. Please do get in touch if you have any questions (it may take us a little time to answer at the moment) and in the meantime, stay safe.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Rob Pavey'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large 'R' and 'P'.

Rob Pavey
Vice Principal – Sixth Form