



6th January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Cambridge Nationals examinations in Creative i-Media, Health and Social Care and Sport

You may have seen the announcement in the media late yesterday regarding individual schools and colleges being left to decide whether to run vocational examinations this month. We are sorry for any anxiety or confusion this announcement may have caused for you or your son or daughter given that they were expecting to sit a Cambridge Nationals exam next Monday (11 January). This was clearly not an announcement we were expecting and has put schools and colleges in a difficult position in terms of having to make a decision on an institution by institution basis. It also appears to be at odds with the decision to cancel GCSEs and A-levels this summer.

Having given this careful consideration, we have decided to cancel the exams next Monday. The health and safety of our students and staff is our number one priority here in school. The Government's decision to close schools to all students apart from those who are vulnerable or whose parents/carers are critical workers was made on health grounds and we do not feel that having an additional 120 students on site at this time is consistent with the 'stay at home' message delivered by the Prime Minister. We are also mindful that a number of the invigilators who were due to invigilate the exam are likely to be shielding under the new lockdown arrangements. The advice from the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL), which represents school and college leaders nationally, and the Association of Colleges (AOC), which represents colleges nationally, is that these examinations should not go ahead.

So what does this mean for my son's/daughter's grade for their Cambridge Nationals qualification? OCR, the awarding body for Cambridge Nationals, have sent an email to schools and colleges this afternoon outlining arrangements for those students who do not sit the January exam. The email states that if students do not take their exams this January that there may be an opportunity to take their assessment at a future date. If this is not possible due to arrangements still to be announced for this summer, the email states that OCR will work with the Department for Education (DfE) and Ofqual to make sure that students are treated fairly.

I'd like to finish by reiterating my apology for the anxiety and confusion this announcement may have caused. Should you have questions or concerns about the contents of this letter, please email Mr P. Banks, Deputy Headteacher on the contactus@highamlaneschool.co.uk email address.

Thank you for your understanding with this matter and for your on-going support.

Yours sincerely,

P.Kelly
Headteacher