

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Student,

I hope both you and your families are well, that you are staying home, staying safe and washing your hands!

I have had a number of enquiries from you over the last few days around three main areas:

- 1) UCAS – offers and places
- 2) Student Finance
- 3) Final Examination Grades

I will outline here the most up to date information from UCAS, OFQAL and Student Finance England but please be aware these are changing often, so checking websites and social media platforms regularly is important. The Student Finance England social media platforms are currently down, and they are not responding to calls or emails.

### **UCAS – offers and places** <https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate>

On 23 March, the Government asked universities in England to stop making unconditional offers or amending existing offers to students for two weeks. They have said this is to give everyone more time to gain clarity on the new processes for awarding qualifications and also to give students more time to consider their options. They have **extended the upcoming May undergraduate offer** deadlines for universities and students by two weeks.

Once they have finalised the new date, this will be communicated to UCAS correspondents, schools, and affected applicants this week. **They are still informing schools and applicants to expect the admissions cycle to run broadly similar to previous years, and there will be flexibility for applicants to make choices throughout the rest of the year, including a Confirmation and Clearing process over the summer.** They have made clear and strong reassurances that they remain focussed on making sure no applicant is disadvantaged during this time of uncertainty, and that they will continue to be on hand to support both us in schools and you at home each step of the way.

### **STUDENT FINANCE ENGLAND** <https://www.gov.uk/student-finance-register-login>

You can continue to apply for student finance, and they will continue to process any applications that have been received as quickly as they can. They will continue to process any applications that have been received as quickly as possible and they do not currently expect any delays with funding being in place for the time courses start. Following the most recent Government guidance however STUDENT FINANCE ENGLAND has changed the way they deliver their services. They have closed all customer contact centres

temporarily meaning you will not be able to contact them via phone or social media. Please keep checking their TWITTER site should you need to speak to them.

## EXAM RESULTS <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual>

This is most likely to be the area for which you are seeking reassurance and clarity and it is the area that is the most difficult to explain with certainty at this point in time. The excerpt below is the most recent information I have to hand; it was published yesterday.

*'Students understandably want reassurance, and teachers urgently need to know what to do, and when. We expect to publish detailed information about the process and timetable which will apply this summer **next week**. This will include the steps we would like teachers to follow and more detailed guidance on how to consider the full range of evidence they will have available when submitting their assessment grades. We are talking to teaching representatives to make sure that what we are planning is manageable and appropriate, so that students, parents, carers and teachers can have confidence in the approach. We will outline by Easter the process we will follow to make sure grades are fair across schools and colleges, as well as our proposals for appeals. We will also say more as soon as possible about the arrangements for additional exams in the new academic year.'*

As I mentioned when we spoke last Friday morning on your last day in school, as soon as we have the information from OFQAL, as outlined in the paragraph above, we will start to plan how we can best support you to achieve a fair grade. At this point in time it appears that the school will not have the final say in your result and that it will be QFQAL the body regulating qualifications, exams and tests in England, that will do this. This however has not yet been confirmed.

If you want to chat about any of these areas please email me at work, [slayas@holyfamilyschool.uk](mailto:slayas@holyfamilyschool.uk) or message me on Google Classroom ( code 2owk54c) and I will give you a call. These are difficult times for all, but rest assured it will pass, and our lives will return to normal, hopefully sooner rather than later.

Stay safe, stay home and wash your hands,

Thank you for your continued support



Mrs Layas

Director of Sixth Form