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Deputy Headteachers: Brian Burns B.A. (Hons), N.P.Q.H. — Craig Wicking B.Sc. (Hons), N.P.Q.H.

24<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers and Students,

## GCSE and A Level Examinations 2020

On Friday the 20<sup>th</sup> of March, the Department for Education released an initial statement regarding the awarding of exam qualifications this year. The statement can be viewed here - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/further-details-on-exams-and-grades-announced>

We are monitoring the developments closely and are working hard to ensure that when the time comes, grades will be entered accurately, taking all evidence into account.

I copy and paste below, the key elements that you should be aware of from this guidance:

*This means ensuring GCSE, A and AS level students are awarded a grade which fairly reflects the work that they have put in. There will also be an option to sit an exam early in the next academic year for students who wish to. Ofqual will develop and set out a process that will provide a calculated grade to each student which reflects their performance as fairly as possible, and will work with the exam boards to ensure this is consistently applied for all students. The exam boards will be asking teachers, who know their students well, to submit their judgement about the grade that they believe the student would have received if exams had gone ahead.*

*To produce this, teachers will take into account a range of evidence and data including performance on mock exams and non-exam assessment – clear guidance on how to do this fairly and robustly will be provided to schools and colleges. The exam boards will then combine this information with other relevant data, including prior attainment, and use this information to produce a calculated grade for each student, which will be a best assessment of the work they have put in.*

Prior attainment refers to: AS/A-Level, BTEC, GCSE or KS2 grades that have been awarded / certificated in a previous exam period.

*The aim is to provide these calculated grades to students before the end of July. In terms of a permanent record, the grades will be indistinguishable from those provided in other years. We will also aim to ensure that the distribution of grades follows a similar pattern to that in other years, so that this year's students do not face a systematic disadvantage as a consequence of these extraordinary circumstances.*

As stated here, therefore, a range of data will be taken into account in establishing all grades, and therefore no single piece of data will decide your final grade in a subject. It is worth noting that the exam boards, not teachers, will have the final say in determining a student's grades. As I am sure you will understand, we cannot enter into negotiations with individual students regarding their grades.

Our clear advice is:

- that you work hard to complete your course to the best of your ability, as you may well wish to sit an exam early in the next academic year and therefore should prepare as well as you can for this. This includes any coursework, but also to ensure that you have completed learning the course content.
- that you complete any work set by teachers now to the best of your ability, given that a range of data will be taken into account in determining your grade.

If you have any questions about any of this, please do not hesitate to get in contact with Mr Wicking or Mr Sanders via their email addresses below:

Mr Craig Wicking - [cwicking@southborough.kingston.sch.uk](mailto:cwicking@southborough.kingston.sch.uk)

Mr David Sanders - [dsanders@southborough.kingston.sch.uk](mailto:dsanders@southborough.kingston.sch.uk)

Please be assured that Southborough High School will do everything we can to make sure that the grades awarded, accurately reflect the hard work and effort that students have put in. We are committed to ensuring that students have the academic and pastoral support that they require to make a successful transition onto their next phase, whether in education, training or employment.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Niall Smith', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

**Niall Smith**  
**Headteacher**