

JST/NBA

6 January 2021

Dear Students Parent and Carers

January Exam series and online learning

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you of our decision regarding the January exam series. We had hoped to receive clear national guidance about whether formal examinations starting next week should continue or not. I am sad to say that this clarity has not been forthcoming, with the individual decision being left to schools and colleges. Alongside many other schools and colleges across the Country, **the UTC has had to make the difficult decision to cancel all exams** therefore students do not need to attend for any examinations in January / February.

Positively, our decision to do this has been reinforced by the support from exam boards, who have stated that no student will be disadvantaged should they not sit an exam in January 2021 and all students will receive the grades they deserve in the summer. Please see the points below which have been shared today by OCR and Edexcel:

“Our priority is to ensure students are not disadvantaged.

- 1. 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, we'll work with the DfE and Ofqual to make sure they are treated fairly.*
- 2. If students were going to certificate in January, we'll award a grade to a student if there is enough evidence, to help them progress.”*

Having moved into National Lockdown on Monday evening and with the rapid rise of Covid-19 infections across the Country, the UTC cannot justify the risk of large numbers of students travelling from various distances and sitting exams for extended periods of time, when we can still ensure the students receive the grades they deserve across all qualifications.

The Education Secretary has confirmed today that grades in the summer of 2021 will be awarded using a similar process to the one used in the summer of 2020. This will mean Centre Assessed Grades (CAG) will be generated based on evidence and assessments students have already completed or will complete between now and the end of the year.

As per my previous letter, can I please emphasise the importance of students in exam year groups engaging with remote learning and their teachers, to ensure this evidence is as robust as possible.

Each year group now has a Teams group set up. Within this will be activities additional to the curriculum. The Teams groups will include weekly assemblies and information for students, wellbeing activities and much more. There is also be the opportunity for students to catch up with staff once a week.

If you are having any problems with online learning, please contact us at: adminolp@utcsheffield.org.uk and thank you for your understanding over the last few days, as we have rapidly moved online and are addressing any issues raised.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stevenson".

Mrs J Stevenson
Principal
UTC Sheffield OLP