



19 March 2020

Dear Colleague

You will be aware of the impact of COVID-19 on education in Wales and the decisions which have had to be made in the context of serious and rapid public health developments. Welsh Government has had to take the decision to cancel exams for summer 2020 given that there can be no guarantee for when exam centres will be able to re-open and conduct exams safely and securely. The situation is the same in England and we expect similar decisions across the UK.

We agree that cancelling exams for summer 2020 is the right decision. We are working with Welsh Government, WJEC and fellow UK regulators to ensure that learners due to sit their GCSEs and A levels will be awarded a fair grade to recognise their work. We are also looking at other qualifications and will update on these when we can.

This is an unprecedented situation at a time of serious and rapid public health developments. It is also an especially anxious time, particularly for anyone preparing for high stakes exams. We appreciate that people have a large number of questions and we aim to answer these as soon as we can, to give clarity for learners, parents, education professionals and anyone else affected at this uncertain time.

We are pooling expertise and experience to protect learners in the exams system. In this extreme circumstance with widespread global disruption, there is no ideal scenario for exams which, by nature, run as carefully controlled events.

Our priority is ensuring fairness for learners while following public health advice.

In terms of our work, we have also scaled back face to face engagement in line with public health advice but will continue to talk to stakeholders using all available technology.

If you are responsible for an exam centre, we ask you to ensure that lines of communication remain open between you and the awarding bodies that you work with so that information –

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and any requests for information – can be shared quickly. We will continue to communicate with you using the email addresses that we have for key contacts at exam centres. Our External Relations team will also reach out to all exam centres over the coming days to ensure that we can communicate effectively.

The situation is clearly changing rapidly, and we will continue to be guided by advice from the relevant authorities. We will be posting updates on our website.

I aim to update you with further details as soon as possible and appreciate your patience. Meanwhile, I hope you are managing at this deeply unsettling time.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Philip Blaker', is positioned above the typed name and title.

Philip Blaker
Chief Executive