

22 January 2021



**TRURO  
SCHOOL**

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Dear Upper Sixth Parents and Carers

I hope you are well. This letter updates you regarding:

- A Upper Sixth Parents' Online Q&A session (Wednesday 27 January: 6pm)
- Public Examinations
- UCAS

### **Upper Sixth Question and Answer Session**

Firstly, may I invite you to an online Parents' Online Question and Answer session. Given the uncertainties that currently exist around exactly how A level grades will be established, and our current need for lockdown learning, we recognise that you may well have questions that go beyond your own child's individual progress. For this reason, we are running a **Question and Answer Session for Upper Sixth Parents on Wednesday 27 January: 6-7pm**. The purpose is to give you and your sons or daughters, who are equally welcome to attend with you, the opportunity to hear answers to questions that you may have.

This online Q&A session will be hosted by the Head, Andy Johnson, and the panel will include the Deputy Head (Academic), Shaun Pope, Deputy Head of Sixth Form, Lucy Jupp, and myself. We wanted to offer this opportunity as soon as possible given the current uncertainties and the anxieties we know some of you and the students are currently feeling. If you have questions that relate to the wider current situation that you would like addressed in this Q&A, please email them to Mrs Usher-Sparks at [jus@truroschoo.com](mailto:jus@truroschoo.com) before 9 am on Wednesday 27 January, with the email header of 'Upper Sixth Q&A'. When addressing questions submitted in advance, the panel will not share the identity of the questioner. If there is time after addressing the pre-submitted questions, we will invite further discussion in the time available.

You can sign into this Q&A session at 6pm on Wednesday evening, which will be run through Microsoft TEAMS, using the following link: [Upper Sixth Parents' online Q and A session](#)

### **Public Examinations**

Ahead of this event, I wanted to share in more detail our current understanding and position in regard to the uncertainties surrounding summer examination grades. The school shares the frustration that you and your children feel in a year when the way their final grades will be decided has been changed again, and still remains unclear. The DfE, Ofqual, and exam boards are currently in a consultation process that we expect to continue until near the end of January. At this stage, we know no more than is evident in the official statements made. We are also mindful of the at times unhelpful and anxiety inducing media coverage of this situation. That is why we wish to be transparent over our position and to offer the Q&A event to support you how we can. We are committed, of course, to sharing any new information with you as soon as we have it.

In terms of what we know, we hope this summary will help:

A level examinations will not run as planned this summer. Instead, grades will be generated by teachers in schools based on criteria that will be shared with schools after the current consultation

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period is completed. We expect to draw on academic data we already have alongside data we are still to generate (including further assessment of pupils remotely and ideally also, in time, on site). The process will be sensitive to wider factors that may have materially impacted on assessment performance, so data projections will be allied to evidence based professional judgement too. Whilst we await clear steers from the DfE and Ofqual to support the fairness of this process, we can say with confidence that there is still very much to play for and we expect all pupils to continue to study ambitiously to help themselves and us towards the grades they deserve.

Amidst the uncertainties outlined above, which we expect to be progressively resolved from the end of this month, there remains one clear certainty. The certainty is that the work your children do from now onwards still matters. It matters to their final grades. It also matters to their longer-term success, because after the summer they will begin next step in their educational journey whether that be at University, heading into the world of work, starting an apprenticeship or going on a gap year. To make that leap well, they will need a firm grip on A level material and skills. Our view is that these realities are the key current motivation to continue to engage ambitiously with learning. This is the case whether the exact form of assessment to come is a domestic A level paper, a teacher set assessment, online, in school, or any combination of these things, in accordance with the regulations once released. The students are best served by continuing to focus on improving their knowledge and understanding, and not being diverted by uncertainties over the exact format of assessment to come. With this in mind, we will continue to teach and prepare them and are confident in being able to support them through this challenging time. As communicated in the autumn, we planned an additional set of mock style examinations at the beginning of the summer term. We are hopeful but have learned that there is no guarantee that we will be in school by that time, or a clear definition of the exact way such exam data might need to be utilised in the generation of teacher assessed grades. However, we will keep this plan in place and adjust it to achieve the maximum benefit for the students as details are released by exam boards, keeping you fully updated all the while.

### **UCAS Update**

Finally, with the UCAS deadline for applications being next Friday 29 January, little has changed at the moment with regard to application process other than the deadline being shifted back two weeks. Students have been receiving their offers as usual and will have follow up sessions with the tutor team and I to help guide them in making their firm and insurance choices. We also have a number of virtual events lined up for Upper Sixth students throughout this term to help support them in making their decisions and preparing for their next steps at the end of the academic year.

I look forward to speaking to you next Wednesday

Kind Regards

Ross Williamson  
Head of Sixth Form