

6th January 2021

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

Ref: Year 10 OCR National Examination, Monday 11th January 2021, **Sports Science (Risk of Sports Injuries) and Sports Studies (Contemporary Issues in Sport)**

I hope that this letter finds you and your family safe and well. I wanted to contact you in regard to the previously scheduled Year 10 OCR National exams that are due to take place on Monday morning of next week. Originally, we had scheduled that 101 students from Year 10 would be sitting Sports Studies “Contemporary Issues in Sport” and 43 students from Year 10 would be sitting Sports Science “Risk of Sports Injuries” exams.

In light of the government announcement on Monday evening of this week and the rapidly increasing rate of Covid-19 infection, I have taken the very difficult decision to **cancel both of these exams**. I know that this news will come as a disappointment to many as I know you will have prepared, revised and have worked very hard over a number of weeks and months, with your teachers, to be ready to sit these exams. My decision to cancel these exams is based primarily on three main factors:

1. It is extremely difficult to make these exams “Covid-19 secure” given the numbers of candidates involved. It would require, among many other things, the spacing of exam desks at a minimum of 3m apart, all students wearing masks throughout the exam itself, the exam room itself being temperature controlled to a low temperature with a constant air flow ventilation running through the room. These conditions are not conducive to effective exam performance. These will be stressful circumstances and not a good experience for our students to have as their first main external examination. It will have a detrimental impact on their ability to perform to the best of their ability in the exam itself.
2. It is possible for us to reschedule these exams for the January 2022 sitting and our students will not miss out on any opportunity to perform to the best of their ability. Having discussed this with our subject teachers, we feel that it is possible for us to adjust the curriculum planning so that our students are equally as well prepared, if not better due to hopefully a lessening of disruption through Covid-19, for January 2022. Hence this decision is a non-detrimental decision.

3. Ultimately, however the decision is one of health and safety. With the announcement of a stay at home order, the increasing transmission rates in our community and the mass closure of schools except for a very small number of students, the risk of infection and transmission of hosting these exams at the level planned is too dangerous.

I know that some of you will feel disappointed as you have prepared fully for these exams, hence I wanted to get this note to you as soon as practically possible after the government announcements from Monday and Tuesday. I am sending this note to you in advance of hearing further from government today in regard to the summer exams, however it is clear that the summer exam season for Yr11 has been cancelled on the basis of health and safety and therefore this decision for Year 10 next week is an extension of that.

All of our staff are working extremely hard to upscale mass testing of all students and staff however this will not be in place in advance of next Monday and therefore ultimately we have made the decision to cancel these Year 10 exams. I would encourage our students to discuss this with their subject teachers when on-line in their lessons in Microsoft Teams next week. These are extremely challenging times however we believe our plan for moving the assessments to January 2022 will not adversely affect our students and in many cases will allow for a greater depth of preparation and a more conducive environment in which to sit the exam.

Yours faithfully



Mr David Waugh
Principal