



# Portadown College

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Principal: Gillian R Gibb, BA(Hons), PGCE, MSc, PQH(NI)

16 March 2021

## **RE: ALTERNATIVE AWARDING PROCESS 2021**

Dear Year 14 Parent/Carer

I trust you and your family remain safe and well.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as you and your son/daughter have awaited further detail in respect of Alternative Awarding Arrangements 2021.

As you will be aware, I wrote on 24 February 2021 to inform you that students in Years 12, 13 and 14 will undertake a series of internal assessments in College from **Monday 19 April to Friday 7 May 2021 (inclusive)**. As advised, the purpose of these internal assessments is to complete the portfolio of evidence for each subject, in accordance with the Department of Education's requirement for schools to generate Centre Determined Grades for students following the cancellation of public examinations due to the ongoing pandemic.

Please note, as stipulated by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), all schools are required to have a Centre Determined Grade Policy for 2021. Students, parents and carers will receive details of the College's policy in due course.

### **Internal Assessments Summer Term 2021**

Please find attached subject-specific information in relation to the internal assessments which has already been shared with students via their Google Classrooms. Additional internal assessment information regarding dates, timings and venues will be disseminated as soon as possible.

Please note that these internal assessments are not high stakes examinations; rather, they will constitute a strand of each student's portfolio of evidence, as required by the Department of Education, in the generation of Centre Determined Grades for 2021.

As you will note, these internal assessments, given that they are not external examinations, have been reduced in length and content to reflect the exceptional circumstances of the ongoing public health emergency and its impact on the learning experiences of our students.

### **Access Arrangements and Special Consideration**

#### (i) Access Arrangements

Access Arrangements, as already in place, will continue throughout the period of internal assessment.

In line with Department of Education guidance, students will be afforded the **option** to take all of the assessment resources provided for each unit of their courses. This opportunity is being provided in order to give students wishing to avail of this provision experience of assessment across the whole subject specification. Please note that, should a student choose to take the optional assessment resources for a particular subject and underperform in any aspect therein, performance information from these optional assessments does not have to be accounted for in the generation of the Centre Determined Grade.

The deadline for students to nominate to take optional assessment resources is **3:35pm 14 April 2021**. Students will receive further information in respect of optional internal assessments on their return to College week beginning 22 March 2021.

At this stage, I would seek to reassure you and our young people that it is the College's desire to adopt a student-centred approach to the completion of each student's portfolio of evidence for their subjects. Accordingly, teachers will deliver no new material in class or conduct any assessments during the week beginning 22 March 2021. Furthermore, no assessments will be conducted in class during the week beginning 12 April 2021. It is anticipated that these arrangements will afford students an opportunity to reacclimatise to College life and re-connect with their teachers through face-to-face learning experiences.

(ii) Special Consideration

As public examinations have been cancelled, the normal application process to the awarding organisation for special consideration will not apply this summer in the usual manner. However, where illness or other personal circumstances, covered by the JCQ guidelines, might have affected the candidate's standard of performance, Portadown College will take account of this when making judgements. Class teachers will record how they have determined any impact of illness or personal circumstances and how this was incorporated into their judgements in the Candidate Assessment Record. The maximum allowance that can be applied in the most exceptional cases is 5%, while the most common category of allowance is 2%.

Should you wish to make the College aware of information that falls within the JCQ guidelines regarding illness or other personal circumstances, please complete the form via the link below. The JCQ guidelines are listed on the form. Please note that completion of the form does not guarantee that an allowance will be granted and the College may contact you for more information, such as medical evidence, if necessary. Any information that you record on the form will be treated with utmost sensitivity, with relevant staff informed on a need-to-know basis only.

For students in **Year 14**, information applicable from September 2019-present should be recorded. Information should be shared with the College, via the form, **by 3:35pm on 14 April 2021**. You will be advised as to arrangements of how to notify College of illness or other personal circumstances relating to your son/daughter during the forthcoming period of internal assessment at a later date.

Please note that in accordance with the JCQ arrangements, a special consideration allowance cannot be applied or considered for lost teaching and learning due to COVID-19. Instead, lost teaching and learning will be addressed via the assessment method and the flexibility afforded to the centre in the content that will be assessed:

[Notification of illness or personal circumstances: Summer 2021](#)

**College Return - Special Assembly**

In advance of Year 14 returning to College on 22 March 2021, a Special Assembly was shared with students via their Year Group Google Classroom (code: **uei2xwr**) on 15 March 2021. All students are encouraged to watch the Special Assembly as it contains important information regarding the forthcoming return to College.

**Year 13 and 14 Lunchtime Arrangements**

Please be advised that Year 13 and 14 will not be permitted to leave College at lunchtime in the week commencing 22 March. This situation will be kept under review and students will be informed accordingly. Students in Year 13 and 14 can continue to go home at lunchtime each Wednesday afternoon until further notice.

Parents/carers will receive a further Parentmail this week regarding additional practical arrangements for the return to College on 22 March 2021.

Should you have any queries in relation to the above information, you are welcome to contact me here in the College at any stage.

Thank you for your unstinting support and understanding.

Yours sincerely

*Gillian R Gibb*

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Principal