

6th January 2021

Important Information Re: January Vocational Examination Series

Dear Student and Parent/Carers,

Since the general letter outlining the arrangements in place for the start of the Spring Term was issued yesterday, there have been further developments in relation to January vocational examinations. The Government have listened to the genuine concerns of colleges and students about their decision to continue with the January vocational examination series during the national lockdown. As a result, yesterday evening the Department for Education confirmed that colleges could now take the decision on whether to continue with these planned external assessments. We have reviewed the situation further this morning and decided not to proceed with the January vocational assessments.

The health, wellbeing and safety of our students and staff remains our most important priority. In the context of the continuing concerns about the scale of local infection rates in Leicester and Leicestershire, the importance of the current stay at home message and the wide range of areas from which examination candidates and staff would need to be travelling from, not proceeding with these examinations is the appropriate decision at this time.

In reaching this decision we have reviewed and considered communication from one of the key awarding bodies about their likely response where centres and students cannot sit the examinations and have been reassured that there is an intention not to disadvantage students. The following is the statement from Pearson/Btec;

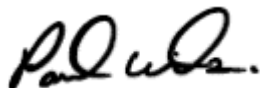
“The DfE confirmed on January 4 that they expected scheduled vocational exams to go ahead and it has updated that guidance today (5 January) to give schools, colleges and training providers the choice to offer students vocational exams, should schools and colleges judge it right to do so.

We want to ensure that you are supported by us regardless of the choice that is made by your school or college on whether exams take place. If your college or school decides to offer exams, you will be able to run your external assessments as planned and if your school or college decides not to offer vocational exams, we have agreed the following with Ofqual and the DfE to ensure that no learner is disadvantaged.

- *We will certificate any learner who is unable to take their exams and has enough evidence to receive a certificate that they need for progression.*
- *Learners unable to take their assessment this January may be able to take their assessment at a later date. If that is not possible, we will put in place arrangements to ensure no learner is disadvantaged.*

We recognise that the uncertainties relating to these national developments and the lack of clarity colleges and students have so far been provided with may be unsettling. You continue to have access to support from your PPM and through your teachers should you need this in the coming days and weeks. Please be assured that the College and our staff will continue to work with awarding bodies in your best interests and in response to any further guidance as this emerges during this quite exceptional period. We will of course provide further updates and information to you as soon as we are able to do so and encourage you to remain fully engaged in the teaching and learning associated with all ongoing courses in the meantime.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Wilson', written in a cursive style.

Paul Wilson
PRINCIPAL