



**ALTON  
HAVANT  
SOUTH DOWNS**

6 January 2021

Dear Student,

Yesterday evening, the Department for Education issued new information regarding January vocational exams as follows:

*"In light of the evolving public health measures, schools and colleges can continue with the vocational and technical exams that are due to take place in January, where they judge it right to do so. We understand this is a difficult time, but we want to support schools and colleges whose students have worked hard to prepare for assessments and exams where necessary. ..."*

*Schools and colleges have already implemented extensive protective measures to make them as safe as possible. We will continue to work with Ofqual, awarding organisations and other stakeholders to discuss the next steps and provide more detail on the way forward, including ensuring other students have a way to progress with as little disruption as possible."*

Whether at Havant, Alton or South Downs, HSDC will provide you the opportunity to sit your exams this month as planned for all those who wish to take them. You now have a choice: we encourage you to take your January exams if you have been able to prepare and are ready for the exam, can travel into College safely and are not self-isolating or ill. However, if you consider you are not ready to take the exam because your studies have been disrupted by the pandemic, or if you are worried about getting to campus or being around other students during the exam, then you may choose not to take it.

I should stress that the Department for Education has not yet said what will replace these January exams. It is possible that you will be required to take the exam in the summer instead, or there may be another arrangement - there is no information on this yet. I accept that this will cause considerable anxiety for many of you and indeed I would like to thank those who have already written to express their desire to sit the exam and others who have highlighted their concerns.

Please think carefully about the best decision for you. We know that you will have worked hard to prepare for these exams, so if you can safely take the exams, we encourage you to do so. However, we also recognise that some of you will have suffered considerable hardship in the last few months and may have concerns around your health and safety that will prevent you from taking these exams or performing well in them.

We are here to help you consider all the factors and I urge you to talk with your teacher and tutor regarding the best option for you via email and Google Classroom. We would also request that you confirm receipt of this communication with your teacher.

Please be assured that we will support you all we can and ensure that you succeed over the year ahead despite all the difficulties.

Best wishes,

**Mike Gaston**  
**Principal and Chief Executive**



Mike Gaston, Principal & CEO

**HSDC**

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