



Blackwood Comprehensive School – Ysgol Gyfun y Coed Duon

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Ymdrech I Drechu – Strive To Succeed

Our reference WJEC GCSE English (January series)

Friday 4 March

Dear Parent

As you are aware, most pupils in Year 11 sat GCSE modular tests in English in January. These tests constitute 60% of the overall GCSE grade. The other 40% of the grade includes the controlled assessment and speaking and listening tasks, which are undertaken in the classroom and assessed internally.

Staff and some pupils have been disappointed by the outcomes in these modular tests, many of which do not reflect the ability of the pupil or our expectations of them in terms of achievement. However, this seems to be the case in other schools across Wales where expected grades do not correspond with the results, and average marks appear to be deflated overall.

This situation has happened in previous years, including in 2015. However, in 2015, the final GCSE results in English at Blackwood were well above the national average at all levels including A*/A and A*-C. We therefore expect to see pupils improve significantly on these results.

We have determined a sensible course of action to address this situation:

- All pupils will be able to re-sit the modules in the summer series. The highest mark taken from each of the tests will stand;
- Each pupil's performance in each element of the examination is compared with national outcomes. These will be made available to parents and pupils, so we will be able to identify specific areas of strength and weakness on the papers. For example, we will analyse performance in the writing or reading sections of each paper and look for specific issues;
- Where there have been clear and obvious differences between expectation and outcome, we will be requesting the return of question papers, so that we can more closely scrutinise performance. We use this to inform teaching and all pupils will benefit from the information gained here;
- We can ask for work to be re-marked. In some instances, this has a beneficial effect as marks are moved upwards; however, it is also the case that marks can be moved down. Written permission from the pupil is required prior to any request for re-marking;





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- We are currently considering submitting a request to review marking and will contact pupils and parents should we decide to pursue this course of action.

In addition to these actions, our teachers will continue to offer weekly revision sessions for pupils up to the exams. Pupils must take advantage of these and do all they can to ensure the highest possible grades in their controlled assessments and speaking and listening tests. We will inform parents of any additional revision sessions, when we publish the whole school revision calendar later on this term.

Should you have any further questions or concerns, please contact Mrs Rudman or Mrs Rawson who will be happy to advise.

Yours sincerely

RK Pawar (Headteacher)

