

# The Hemel Hempstead School

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**Headteacher: Neil Hassell BEng (Hons) NPQH FRSA**

**Letter 75**

23 November 2018

Dear Parents/Carers

## **LEVEL 2 BUSINESS COURSE**

As you may know, there have been extensive curriculum reforms over the past few years which have led to new GCSEs and new A Levels in all subjects. Vocational programmes such as BTECs are included in these reforms and, as such, all courses needed to undergo review and approval by the relevant authorities. This external process has taken a long time and was not complete for courses offered to Year 10 students by the time these courses began in September. We were obliged to continue with the Level 2 BTEC Business course we had chosen for your sons and daughters in good faith in the expectation that it would be approved by OfQual, given that it was a very popular qualification offered by one of the largest examining bodies, Pearson. Sadly, Pearson did not do enough to prove to OfQual that the qualification could meet their standards; OfQual did not approve the qualification and we are left in the situation of having to move students to an alternative course due to circumstances beyond our control.

Fortunately, suitable alternatives are available and these alternatives offer the same content as the original qualification as this content is prescribed by OfQual. Therefore, course coverage so far has not been wasted and will be highly relevant. Clearly, a switch of qualification will trigger a new assessment regime and, therefore, work which has been completed so far will be treated as practice. This work has been important for setting benchmarks and expectations as to what is expected both with regard to the quality of work and conduct issues such as integrity and submission. It must be said at this point that Year 10 students have made an excellent start to their studies of Business and have seen this development as an opportunity.

We will be switching the students to the Level 1/2 Technical Award in Business and Enterprise offered by the NCFE board. As mentioned earlier, this covers the same content but assesses differently, with coursework accounting for 60% and examination 40%. We feel it is a better qualification than the BTEC. The coursework is completed exclusively in Year 11 and we see this as a positive development; there is some evidence that students are not always ready for internal assessment in Year 10, as they need to be to take full advantage. In addition, BTEC offers an almost unceasing assessment regime, which can be demoralising and arduous for students, especially for those who find extended writing challenging.

We do hope that you understand the reasons for making this change – we appreciate that this is not an ideal development but it is one which has been forced upon us. Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tim Jordan'.

**Tim Jordan**  
**Deputy Headteacher**