



Principal **Nick Martin**
BSc, MA, PGCE, NPQH

Dear parents,

As you may have read in the press, Ofqual has raised concerns about the GCSE Computer Science NEA (non-examined assessment). This is coursework taken under certain restricted conditions with 20 hours set aside to complete.

Ofqual is concerned that Computer Science students across the country have been posting messages about the NEA and sharing solutions online. This is in breach of the rules and could give some students an unfair advantage such that, if the NEA marks were to be counted towards the overall mark in the summer, the grades may not accurately reflect a student's true ability in this subject. In response to this Ofqual is consulting on what steps to take next and whether marks for the NEA should be included in the final mark. Understandably this is a concern for students here at Samuel Whitbread Academy since, like most schools across the country, we have already started the NEA.

The Academy has decided that it is in our students' best interests to continue with the NEA project under the same restricted conditions until the results of the consultation are known and a decision is made in early January. Stopping the NEA or lifting the restricted conditions would risk disadvantaging our students if the decision by Ofqual was to retain the NEA marks putting pressure on our students who would be rushing to complete the NEA in order to meet the March deadline for the submission of marks.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding with this matter and if you have any further questions regarding this matter please contact Lee Starkey lstarkey@bestacademies.org.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Lee Starkey
Head of ICT and Computer Science