



Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP
Secretary of State

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Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP
Chair, Education Select Committee
House of Commons
London
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Dear Robert,

Thank you for your letter of 20 November relaying the Committee's views on my proposal to supply it with a summary account setting out the events leading up to and following the decision to cancel exams for summer 2020 through to the awarding of qualifications.

I am sorry that it is the Committee's view that my proposal would not advance the understanding of the events this summer. I note that the Committee believes that the distress caused to students by the changes to the process for awarding grades and the effect on public confidence in qualifications outweighs the effects – which the Committee acknowledges – that releasing official advice and contemporaneous Departmental notes would have on the effective conduct of ongoing policy development in relation to exams in 2021 and future policy making more generally. I remain, however, of the view that my proposal is a helpful and proportionate response which both avoids these detrimental effects and allows for further scrutiny by the Committee, to complement the material already released through the Ofqual Board papers, the published exchange of letters between myself and the former Chief Regulator and my testimony in the oral session.

I realise that this is not the response that the Committee was hoping for. I would like to reiterate that I am fully committed to being as helpful in advancing the work of the Committee as it is possible to be. I am hopeful that we will be able to resolve this issue between us and I have asked that my officials should discuss the parameters for information with the Clerk to the Committee. I understand that this is underway.

I remain happy to discuss this further with you, if you would find this helpful.

Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP
Secretary of State for Education