

Should exams be abolished?

Examinations. The preparation of months of anxiety students build up in hope to achieve a grade enforced on us by schools in order to give themselves a higher status on the League Table. As every debate there are two sides to if examinations have more positive than negative effects on teens in this generation.

Although I didn't do my actual GCSE's I have felt the immense pressure exams do to my health mentally and physically. I continue to find it bizarre that we spend 5 years in secondary school, yet one exam is based upon that whole time. We continue to prepare and revise endlessly for an exam, yet if we don't get the grade we were expecting; we as students, feel frustrated or even not good enough to succeed. As every year goes by Marketisation of education is increasingly getting worse as schools are now more focused on competition, rather than the actual students and their well-being during the stressful period of exams.

Examinations are not only dependent on someone's intelligence but also someone's health and social situation. The education system still lacks to sympathise with the material deprivation some working class students may have, therefore cannot have particular resources to revise at home to achieve the same grades as people who are more financially comfortable to afford tutors etc.

Yes, examinations can prepare students for the future of universities studies and a-levels. Yet, how is it fair to ask one child to sit an exam not knowing how they could feel in themselves that particular day that will showcase the whole potential as a student. With coursework getting abolished in recent years we now have no evidence to argue against these grades given to students by examiners who know nothing about our backgrounds or situation. From doing further research countries such as Finland have primarily stayed in a dominant high place on the international league tables in educational performance. However, Finland's education ambassador has scrapped all forms of exams till the age of 18. Also, making school fees and streaming and setting students on abilities illegal. Giving even more evidence to how we can pose less inequalities in the school system while still enforcing a sense of authority. The United Kingdom is the only European country to have high-stake testing at 16, instead of other European countries that have monitored teacher assessment and low-stake examinations to showcase their students. It is bizarre to me that we still have to remain in school till 18 yet two years beforehand we obsess with examining students before they fully finish their

path of school life. I see GCSEs as an expensive and frustrating set of exams that put immense pressure on students, teachers and parents to reinforce a strict system that highlights social mobility by having 'better off' students achieve higher grades than others that are disadvantaged.

I would like to hear your view on if exams should be abolished as I am just one view to this conflicting topic. But as Albert Einstein said "Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid".

Written by Hollie (year 11)