

Tuesday 23 March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

You have received a number of written communications from us outlining what our approach will be to the awarding of grades for GCSE and Vocational Qualifications this summer. Schools are due to receive further guidance and support from the examination boards by Easter.

Ahead of this week's Progress Evening, we thought we would write to you with a reminder of what we do already know as a result of the extensive consultation by Ofqual when deciding grades:

- Students will only be assessed on the content that has been delivered by their teachers either in school or remotely;
- Teachers can use evidence of a student's performance from throughout the course to inform their judgement;
- Teachers should determine the grades as late in the academic year as is practicable to enable teaching to continue for as long as possible;
- Teachers should use a broad range of evidence across the taught content to determine the grades before submitting the grades to the exam boards. The sources of evidence will be shared with students and parents on a subject by subject level at this week's Progress Evening;
- Students should continue to work on their non-exam assessment (NEA), including for Project qualifications. NEA will be marked by teachers and will contribute to the overall grade, whether or not it has been completed;
- Overall, it will be no easier or harder for a student to achieve a particular grade this year compared to previous years.

It is important to note that there will be an internal and external quality assurance process that the school will be required to follow. The external quality assurance process will require the school to submit the evidence to the examination board on which the grade was decided. There will also be an opportunity for students to appeal their grades to the school and examination board.

As a result of these broad principles and as we outlined in our letter of 4th March, our approach is:

- For students to complete exam style questions in class after a period of re-teaching/revision beforehand. In coursework based subjects, teachers will confirm the aspects of that still need to be completed;

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- For teachers to mark and give students crucial feedback on what they need to improve. This knowledge of areas to improve will give our students the ability to demonstrate improvement in these areas to their teachers in subsequent lessons, class tests, coursework and GCSE level questions enabling students to finish Year 11 in the best possible position.

Whilst these exam style questions will afford students the opportunity to demonstrate the breadth of their knowledge and skills, they will not determine in isolation final grades. They are however another piece of evidence, together with other sources of evidence showing us the level at which students are performing.

I can also confirm that GCSE Results Day will take place on Thursday 12th August. We would always recommend that students come to school in person to collect their results. However, as a result of the Government changing the dates at relatively short notice, and so that families who have booked holidays are not disadvantaged, we will also make GCSE results available online for students to access remotely on Results Days. We will provide further details on the logistics and procedures for this to all Year 11 students and parents in due course.

We look forward to seeing you at this week's Progress Evening.

Kind Regards

Lizzie Girling
Head of School