

29<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to provide parents, carers and students with some additional information regarding GCSE, AS and A-level grading for this summer. Ofqual published its final guidance on 24<sup>th</sup> March. This guidance, alongside the Ofqual's *Information for heads of centre, heads of department and teachers on the submission of teacher assessed grades: summer 2021* has been used to provide key information for this update.

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) has also published a guide for parents, carers and students. This guidance can be found [\[here\]](#).

### Assessment and Evidence

We will assess our students' performance, **only on what content has been delivered to them, in school or remotely by their teachers, to determine the grade each student should receive.** Evidence of a student's performance from throughout the course can be used to inform our judgements. In line with Ofqual guidance, grades will reflect student performance rather than potential and will be determined using a broad range of evidence across the taught content only.

Students should continue to work on their non-exam assessment / coursework (NEA), including for Project qualifications. NEA will be marked by teachers and will contribute to the overall grade, whether it has been completed, but we will not require exam boards to moderate it.

The objective of this exercise is to determine the standard that each student has achieved at the end of their courses. Given this, it is important that more weight is given to assessments that were undertaken towards the end of the programme of study. In addition, a greater weighting will be given to assessments that were conducted in exam conditions, i.e. final assessments and trial exams, as these are a better indicator of standards achieved. The examined content in the Spring assessments has been narrowed considerably and revision topics were published in February to support student preparation over a substantial period of time.

Centres / schools have been asked to share information about assessments that will be used to calculate outcomes in each subject. We will do this prior to the submission of the final grades in June. Please note that these lists are not negotiable. Although Spring assessment results will be reported to parents and students, centres are not permitted to inform students of their final grade(s) prior to the results days.

### Access Arrangements and Special Considerations

Access arrangements should be applied for all assessments where students are entitled to them. If a student sat an assessment previously and they did not receive their access arrangements, suitable adjustments will be made to their outcomes for those assessments.

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Headteacher

## **Supporting Materials**

The exam boards will publish grade descriptors that will outline the expected standard that a student should meet to achieve any given grade. We anticipate that these will be published later this week. Exam boards are also providing a package of support materials for teachers and students which will include questions, mark schemes, data about how students typically performed in individual questions and exemplar materials. These resources will comprise past questions and a proportion of unpublished questions for every subject.

## **Quality Assurance**

Exam boards will put in place arrangements for external quality assurance (QA) to check each centre's internal QA process and, in a sample of centres, to review the evidence for one or more subjects. Sampling should be both random, and risk-based. Exam boards will pay particular attention to schools/centres where results are implausibly high or low. It is expected that this year's results for each school and subject will be broadly in line with those of previous cohorts.

We will be following a robust internal quality assurance process that will involve standardisation of marking across all teachers within a subject area, moderation of scripts and marks awarded, using the published exam board support materials and stringent reviews by members of the senior leadership team. Where possible, we will also be moderating across schools within the Vanguard Learning Trust.

## **Appeals and Results**

Students will be able to appeal their grade. A student who is unhappy with their grade will first ask their centre to check whether an administrative or procedural error has been made.

Where a centre does identify an error in the grade submitted to the exam board, it can submit a revised grade and a rationale for the board to consider. If the exam board is satisfied with the rationale, it will issue a revised grade.

Where a centre does not believe an error has been made, a student can ask the centre to appeal to the exam board on their behalf. The centre will submit the student's appeal to the exam board and provide the evidence on which its judgement was made; the exam board will consider whether, in its view, the grade reflected an appropriate exercise of academic judgement. If the exam board judges that it did not, the exam board will determine the grade that the evidence would support. The exam board will also check that the centre has followed its own process.

## **Results Days**

Results days will be on 10<sup>th</sup> August for AS, A-Level and equivalent results and 12<sup>th</sup> August for GCSE and equivalent results.

## **Autumn Exam Series**

The Department for Education (DfE) and Ofqual are currently consulting about the possibility of an autumn examination series. This will only be accessible for any students who are due to be awarded grades this summer.

## **Ofqual Infographic**

The Ofqual Infographic Summary document can be found [\[here\]](#).

## Key Dates

21 April	Formal assessment window opens
14 May	Formal assessment window closes
21 April - 21 May	Marking and moderation of scripts
w/c 24 May	Summaries of evidence used per subject shared with students
28 May	Departments finalise grades
w/c 7 June	Senior team data moderation and QA
18 June	Final date for grade submission to boards
10 and 12 August	A level and GCSE results respectively

### What should students be doing now?

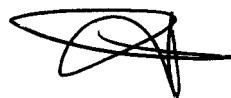
All students should be preparing for their assessments in April / May. Each of their teachers will have provided them with a list of topics that could be covered in their assessments. Students should RAG rate these topics (Red = minimal understanding, Amber = some understanding, etc.) and then should make a revision timetable that allows them to focus on their red and amber areas first. Once they have successfully reviewed an area they should ensure that they complete past paper questions and check their responses against the mark schemes as this application of knowledge makes the biggest difference when it comes to assessment performance. Practice questions and mark schemes can be found on exam board websites.

We are absolutely confident that the process will be as fair and transparent as possible and that all students involved will be provided with grades that reflect their performances for each subject. We will continue to update parents, carers and students throughout the summer term. In the meantime, we would like to wish you all a very happy Easter break.

Yours faithfully,



**Gary Mullings**  
**Headteacher**



**Nicola Harvey**  
**Deputy Headteacher**  
**(Curriculum and Assessment)**