



23rd April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Grading for Summer 2020 Examinations

I wanted to write with an update regarding examination grading for 2020 summer examinations for Year 11 and Year 13.

You will be aware that Ofqual have launched a consultation on the details of proposals for GCSE and A' level exam grading this summer. Whilst nothing will be absolutely confirmed for another few weeks, it seems sensible to assume that this now forms the basis of what will happen.

You can read this document at the following link [Ofqual consultation](#), but I have summarised the key points as follows:

- Schools must provide exam boards with the grades they think students were most likely to receive in each subject, alongside a rank order of all students doing each subject.
- When submitting this information, schools need to make 'holistic judgements' using everything they know about students. This includes classwork, homework, performance in tests, trial exams and any coursework completed (or partially completed). It is important to understand that schools will use all this information to make a judgement about what grades students were most likely to get if schools had not been closed and exams went ahead as usual. This will take into account the likely progress students would have made during their remaining time at school. We have detailed records of students assessments and progress over the entirety of their courses and so do not require any students to bring in exercise books from subjects to support with this.
- The guidance states that "where additional work has been completed after schools and colleges were closed on 20 March, Heads of Centre should exercise caution where that evidence suggests a change in performance. In many cases this is likely to reflect the circumstances and context in which the work is done." With this in mind, we are not requesting that students submit any additional work completed after the schools were closed on 20th March 2020 (further information regarding NEA / coursework in art, photography, design and technology can be found later in this letter).

- It is very important for students and parents to be aware that Ofqual are being very clear that schools are not allowed to share the information they submit to the exam boards. This is to prevent a situation where schools are put under pressure by families to influence the process. Ofqual state that any attempts to influence school judgements “may be investigated by an exam board and found to constitute malpractice, which may result in sanctions”. Therefore, we respectfully ask that parents and students avoid contacting teachers to discuss individual cases and to understand that teachers have been advised not to engage in any discussions.
- The guidance states that “once centre assessment grades have been submitted, exams boards will carry out a process being developed with Ofqual to statistically standardise the grades between different centres”. The model will combine a range of evidence including:
 - Expected grade distributions at a national level
 - Results in previous years at individual centre level
 - The prior attainment profile of students at centre level

This means that the centre assessment grades submitted and the final grade that students receive could be different.

- Exam results days are confirmed as 13th August for A Levels and 20th August for GCSEs. Sixth form enrolment will therefore go ahead broadly as usual and, as far as we are aware at the moment, so will the UCAS process for university applications. We will be in touch about both nearer the time, as we normally would.
- The intention is that there will be an opportunity for students to take exams in the autumn term. Perhaps understandably, there are no details available on this yet. It is possible, for example, that exams will only be available in some subjects. However, students will be able to take any or all exams in the summer of 2021.

Some parents have contacted school regarding NEA / coursework, particularly in art, food and design & technology at GCSE and A-Level. The initial guidance from Ofqual was to continue with this work while a fair and objective plan was generated for students across the country. As the school closure has gone on, the guidance from Ofqual has been that students and schools do not need to complete the NEA / coursework element of the courses and will base their judgements on the detailed records they hold, up to the school closure on March 20th. This is to ensure parity across all students who will be in vastly differing contexts and circumstances following the closure.



We realise this may be disappointing to students, particularly in art, food and design & technology where some students have spent considerable amounts of time on this work. Of course, we would be delighted to see the creative work our students have undertaken in these subjects since the closure and hope that this has been a positive activity during the restrictions. **However, any work submitted can only be used to confirm the centre assessed grades and to celebrate the students' efforts.**

We have already had extensive discussions within school about how to ensure the information we submit to the exam boards is as fair, consistent and robust as it is possible to be. Departments will be working very hard over the next few weeks to make their judgements. The process they follow and the conclusions they draw will be monitored very closely by the senior leadership team and, ultimately, by myself. All our decision making and actions will be informed by the guidance provided by Ofqual.

We hope that you and your families remain safe and well.

Yours sincerely

Mr D Turner
Executive Principal

