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Principal: Mrs N Lapskas

26 February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers of Y11 and Y13

RE: GCSE, A Level & BTEC Examinations 2021

I am writing to share further information about the grading of GCSEs, A Levels and BTECs this year following the announcements made on Wednesday by the Department for Education and Ofqual.

Full details of the respective announcements and the consultation decisions can be found here:

[Department for Education - Teacher assessed grades for students](#)

[Ofqual – How qualifications will be awarded in 2021](#)

[Decisions on how GCSE, AS and A level grades will be determined in summer 2021](#)

The last twelve months have been an undoubtedly stressful time for pupils. There has been a great deal of uncertainty and many have missed out, not just on teaching and learning, but on the support offered by face-to-face contact with fellow students, friends, family and employers.

Therefore, I am pleased that the government has decided to trust teachers this year in terms of grading pupils and that there is no planned return of the algorithm used last year. It was also heartening to see that over 100,000 pupils responded to the consultation, the largest ever of its kind.

Key Points:

- Pupils will not sit formal exams
- Grades will be determined by teacher assessment based on a range of evidence
- Exam boards will provide support materials to schools to assist with grading
- Schools will confirm that all of the correct procedures have been followed
- Exam boards will have quality assurance processes in place to ensure grades are fair
- Schools will submit their grades to the exam boards by 18th June
- Results Day will be on Tuesday 10th August for Year 13 and Thursday 12 August for Year 11 – further details will follow

Sources of Evidence:

The exam boards will respond to the consultation decisions and release further information over the coming weeks. Ofqual have stated the following:

Teachers will be able to use evidence about your performance gathered throughout your course to inform their judgement. This might include work that you have already completed, mock exam results, homework or in-class tests. Your teachers may also use questions from exam boards, largely based on past papers, to help assess you, but this won't be compulsory. Reasonable adjustments should be taken into account if you have a disability.

Appeals Process:

Pupils will be able to appeal their grade if they do not feel that this represented a fair result. There will be further details to follow regarding appeals but the immediate wording released states:

A student unhappy with their grade would submit an appeal to the school or college, so that they could check whether an administrative error had been made. If a centre does find an error in the grade submitted, it can submit a revised grade for the board to consider. If a centre does not believe an error had been made, the centre will appeal to the exam board on the student's behalf, and will be supported to do so.

What this means for pupils:

The most important thing for pupils is to continue to engage fully with their education, both remotely and when we return to face to face education. As previously mentioned, we are planning on continuing with the second part of the PPE (mock) exams once students have returned and this will be a major part of the evidence we use to give them their teacher assessed grades, so it is critical that they return to school focused and ready for these internal exams. The Ofqual wording that explains the rationale for the decisions made is again helpful here:

The arrangements for this year are designed so that teaching and learning can continue for as long as possible, so your teachers' judgement of your work should take place as late in the academic year as is practical. It's important that you keep engaged in your learning and study as long as possible so that your hard work can be considered in your grade. And it will stand you in good stead for the next stage of your life. Teachers will tell you which pieces of work will count towards your grade, before your grade is submitted to the exam board

Finally...

I hope that this information is helpful and clarifies the current situation with exams for 2021. When we return to face to face education, pupils will be provided with further details about how we will ensure that they are given support and opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills as part of the evidence for their grade in each subject.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need more information.

Yours faithfully



Mr T Clark
Vice Principal

