

Dear Year 11 Parents

### **Awarding grades to Year 11 students in 2021**

I am now in a position to explain the details of how Year 11 students will be graded for their qualifications this year. This has undoubtedly been an unsettling time for all involved and especially our students. We have worked hard, now that clear guidance has been provided by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) and the Exam Boards, to produce plans that ensure all students are treated fairly and receive grades that reflect the standards they have reached. I have been through the details that follow with Year 11 students in a series of assemblies this week and all documents referred to are available on the Exams page of our website ([here](#)).

We have produced a policy ([available here](#)) that states how Ofqual's guidance will be put into practice. Everything that we have planned to do lies within the scope of the official guidance. The underlying principle is that teachers will submit a grade in each subject based on an assessment of the standard at which a student is performing. This assessment will be drawn from a broad range of evidence which includes work that has already been completed as well as work completed in the weeks to come. All assessments that will be used meet the criteria set out by Ofqual and are based on content that has been taught, taking into account any topics not covered due to school closure. Therefore the grade that is submitted is not a prediction of how a student would have performed in final exams but is an objective and holistic judgement based on evidence.

Each subject has produced an evidence plan that details the evidence that is being used to reach the final grade. These include historical evidence, such as the Year 11 mock exams, and also assessments that are yet to be taken. The evidence plans will be published on the exams webpage next week. The vast majority of the upcoming assessment tasks will be taken next term with some English and mathematics completed prior to the Easter holidays. It is important to note that these are not full exams but instead "in class" assessment tasks assessing specific criteria. With a few exceptions they are no longer than an hour. Access arrangements will be in place for students who are eligible. A schedule of when all the assessment tasks are taking place is [available here](#); you will note that they finish on 21 May.

Once the assessment tasks are completed a series of quality assurance processes are in place to ensure that marking is consistent. The marks will be used in conjunction with the evidence from earlier in the course to generate the final grade. The detail of how this will be achieved will differ between subjects depending on the evidence being used. For example, practical subjects will be using records of assessments of performances and also marks from non-examined assessments (coursework). When all the grades have been collated, further analysis will be carried out looking at the distribution of grades across the cohort. Further details about these and the exam board quality assurance procedures are given in the policy. Finally, grades will be submitted to the exam boards by 18 June.

It is important to note that no marks or grades from the upcoming assessment tasks will be released to students or parents and teachers must not be put under any pressure to do so. This is to avoid any assumptions being made about what the final grade might be. For the same reason we are not giving an end of term grade. Final grades will be released to

students on 12 August, further details about this will be provided nearer the time. A student can appeal if they are unhappy with their grade. We are awaiting further details about how this will work. In brief, the appeal is first made to the school who will check if an administrative or procedural error has been made. If, after this, the student is still unhappy the school will submit an appeal to the exam board who will review the evidence used to reach the final grade. It is worth noting that, following an appeal, a grade could go up or down, or remain unchanged.

I know that a number of you have asked about when Year 11 will no longer need to attend. This question has been put to the Department for Education by professional associations and as yet there has not been a response. We will of course update you once we know.

I appreciate that there is a lot of information included here but thought it best to explain the whole process which, as you can see, is relatively complicated. A copy of this letter will be available on the exams webpage so that you can refer back to it. Do please contact me if you have any further questions.

With kind regards  
Mr T Houghton  
Deputy Headteacher