



**Ashton
Community
Science
College**

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'a school to be proud of'

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1st March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers of Students in Year 11

At the end of last week, the Department for Education released information about how GCSE grades will be awarded this year. The full guidance is available via the link and I will outline the main details below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-how-gcse-as-and-a-level-grades-should-be-awarded-in-summer-2021>:

Who will decide what grades my child receives?

The government has promised that students should not be disadvantaged by the cancellation of exams and that grades will be determined by teachers. They are keen that students will receive a grade which reflects their ability and enables them to progress to the next stage of education, training or employment. Teachers and Heads of Department have a good understanding of the course each student has been following and the work each student has been asked to produce.

How will teachers decide the grade that is awarded?

Schools are expected to use a broad range of evidence to support the overall judgement of each student's performance in every subject. Evidence can be taken from work completed throughout the course as well as work and assessments which will be completed once students return to school. It is important to emphasise that a grade will not be awarded based on a single assessment. Before we submit grades, we will tell students which evidence we have used so that students can tell of us of any mitigating circumstances which may affect their grade.

So is it just the individual subject teachers that determine the grades my child receives?

In short, no. Exam boards will provide grade descriptors and example answers to help teachers ensure that their assessments are fair and consistent. These will be broadly comparable to performance standards from previous years, so teachers and students are clear what is expected for each grade. Students must not pressure their teachers about possible grades. The decisions about grades are the responsibility of the school and not of individual teachers and will be firmly evidence based. I will oversee the process across all subject areas and Miss Asquith will be required to declare formally that all our processes are accurate, consistent and fair. Exam boards will also check our processes and the evidence we have gathered in support of grades awarded.



My child has missed a lot of work during lockdown and feels anxious about the impact of this on their grades. What reassurances can I offer them?

Students' will only be assessed on content which has been delivered and not on any aspects of the specification which have not been covered. GCSE Art and design will only be graded on the portfolio, whether or not it is complete. Teachers have already been working hard on planning supplementary lessons, supporting revision materials and assessments which will allow students to submit work that shows their ability and skills to the level they are capable. More so than ever before, the final 4 months of year 11 can make a massive difference to the grades students receive. The past is the past and we can't change that – but every student can make a positive impact on the present and the future.

When will my child find out what GCSE results they have been awarded?

Grades must be submitted by the school to the exam boards by 18th June 2021.

GCSE results will be published on Thursday 12th August 2021.

If students are unhappy with the grade they receive there will be an appeals process. Grades can go up or down on appeal.

Parents evening Thursday 4th March

I sent a letter to you last week inviting you to the year 11 parents' evening which takes place on Thursday of this week via SchoolCloud. On Wednesday the latest report for year 11 will be uploaded to Insight containing information about students' engagement during lockdown. Please remember that the DC1 assessed grade from before Christmas was based purely on students' performance in the mock exams. I would urge you all to attend Thursday's parents' evening so that you can discuss your child's progress with their teachers as well as receive specific and personal guidance about what they need to do over the coming weeks to gain the qualifications they need and deserve.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming students back to school from 8th March and we will be focused on supporting them achieve their very best. After such a long period of uncertainty, I hope it will be reassuring that clarity is starting to emerge about these next steps.

Yours sincerely



Mrs J Hoyle
Deputy Headteacher