



Holy Family Catholic High School

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Ofqual consultation on the grading of Vocational, GCSEs and AS/A Levels for 2021.

Dear Parents and Pupils,

On Friday 15th January, Ofqual launched its consultation on the grading for vocational qualifications (e.g. BTECs), GCSEs and AS/A Levels for 2021. The purpose of the consultation is to give all stakeholders (including schools, parents and pupils) the opportunity to provide feedback before final decisions are taken. Copies of the consultation papers can be found in the links below. If you would like to respond, you should click on the interactive links on page 6 for GCSEs and AS/A Levels, and page 7 for vocational qualifications. The consultation ends at 11:45pm on Friday 29th January.

GCSEs and AS/A Levels

[Ofqual consultation into the grading of GCSEs and AS/A Levels summer 2021](#)

Below, is a summary of the key proposals contained within the GCSEs and AS/A Levels consultation document:

- **Pupil's will be treated fairly and receive grades they deserve** that will support their progression to the next stage of their education or employment.
- A pupil's grade in each subject will be based on their teachers' assessment of the **standard at which he/she is performing**, not based on an algorithm or a prediction of what the student would have attained if he/she sat examinations this summer.
- Final assessments will be made and submitted to the examination boards **towards the end of the academic year**, at about the time students would have taken their examinations during late May and early June.
- Pupils should continue to engage in their education between now and when final assessments are submitted.
- **The examination boards could provide externally set assessment papers** for schools and teachers to use with their pupils as part of their assessment. The provision of papers by examination boards would support consistency within and between schools and colleges. The teacher, through marking the papers, could consider the evidence of the pupil's work and use that to inform the final assessment.
- Pupils will be assessed only on the **course content they have covered** and what they have learned.
- Where it is part of the qualification's existing specification, **teachers will continue to assess, where possible, any Non-Examination Assessment (NEA)** that a pupil has undertaken in a subject and this may be used to inform the final grade.
- **Teachers should draw on a range of broader evidence of a pupil's work in making their final assessment**, including formal tests, mock examination results and other substantial work, but with greater weight given to work completed nearer the time of final assessment.
- Examination boards should provide support materials and training to help teachers objectively and consistently assess their students' performance.
- To ensure consistency and fairness across subjects and between centres, schools / colleges and the examination boards will put in place robust quality assurance procedures.
- An appeals system should be established to enable students to appeal their grade.
- Results may be issued to candidates as early as **July 2021**.

Vocational Qualifications

[Ofqual consultation into the grading of VTQs summer 2021](#)

Below, is a summary of the key proposals contained within the VTQs (Vocational and Technical Qualifications) consultation document:

- **No pupil taking a VTQ should be advantaged or disadvantaged** as compared to his/her peers taking GCSEs or AS/A Levels.
- Where it is possible to maintain the validity and credibility of the award, pupils may receive **a final grade without having been assessed in all units.**
- **Examinations scheduled for the remainder of this year will not go ahead.**
- In order for the approach with VTQs to replicate, as closely as possible, the approach with GCSEs and A Levels, where examinations cannot be sat alternative assessment arrangements will be put in place and **teacher assessment** may be required.
- Marks awarded in **internally assessed units** completed to date should contribute to the overall grade and, where possible, internally assessed units should continue as normal.
- The awarding organisations (examination boards) will have the flexibility to determine the **minimum evidence required** for a learner to receive a grade and the alternative arrangements for determining the grade where units are incomplete.
- Schools and teachers will be provided with guidance and training by the examination boards to fulfil their responsibilities.
- An appeals system should be established to enable students to appeal their grade.

What can you do?

It is very clear that pupils who were finishing their GCSEs, AS/A Levels and vocational qualifications this summer must continue to work hard and remain fully engaged with their work and remote learning.

GCSEs and AS/A Levels - you should continue to prepare for your mock exams for when you return to school. Your teachers will support you remotely to prepare for your mocks.

Vocational qualifications - you should provide your teachers with all the evidence they ask for. **Consultation** – parents and pupils, if you feel strongly about the proposals (either in support or against), you can participate in the consultation by clicking on the links above.

Remember that this is a consultation at this stage and the proposals set out within the documents may to change. I will be in touch after the consultation with further information when it becomes available. In the meantime, please feel free to get in touch if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Symes