

Friday 26th February

Dear Year 11 & 13 students, parents and carers,

I understand that many of you will be feeling very anxious about this summer's exam grading system. In many ways this letter is a bit of a 'holding statement' while we work out the details following the release of Ofqual's guidance yesterday (Thursday 25th February; the full guidance is [here](#)). However, we do now know the following, which should provide some initial reassurance:

- ❑ There will be no externally set GCSE and A Level exams this summer; this includes the rumoured 'mini exams'.
- ❑ Grades will be based on teacher assessments of students.
- ❑ We will not use one assessment or mock to decide grades; grades will never be based on a single result in a mock exam or assessment. A *range of evidence* will be used.
- ❑ There will be no external 'algorithm' applied to the grades we submit as a school (for example, as happened last year).
- ❑ Schools need to submit their grades to exam boards by the middle of June; the exam boards will then look at the evidence and procedures they have used to ensure grades have been awarded fairly.
- ❑ There will be an appeals process run by the exam boards.
- ❑ Results days have changed (again) and are now as follows: Tuesday 10th August (Year 13 - A Level)) and Thursday 12th August (Year 11 - GCSE)

Please do not panic that all we will be doing when you return is exams and assessments. We will give you plenty of opportunity to ensure you get the grades you deserve and are prepared for your next steps/destinations, hopefully in our own Sixth Form (we are re-designing the common room right now in preparation!) There is an infographic at the bottom of this letter which summarises Ofqual's decisions on exams.

We are discussing with subject leaders in the next few days how best we meet Ofqual's guidance, so there will be more information to follow in due course. **But it is likely that you will complete a *minimum of 3 pieces of assessment (plus any outstanding NEA/coursework) in each subject between now and June to help build up your evidence base.*** These will be in classrooms, with plenty of preparation and guidance from teachers in advance.

We have decided that a planned 'mock exam week' for Year 11 after Easter (as we have suggested before now), is no longer necessary, given that we have been given far more flexibility from Ofqual than expected. Please note: it may be that in some subjects - vocational ones for example - that the minimum number of assessments you complete is slightly different.

We don't yet have clarity about things like an 'end' or 'finish' date for Year 11 and 13 students this summer, but we will work to get this to you as soon as we can.



Longbenton High School
















I hope this has helped to minimise or reduce anxieties a little and will be in touch with more detail as soon as possible. We appreciate that exam years are difficult at the best of times. Don't forget about the bigger picture and don't forget we are all very proud of you already!

Kelly Holbrook
Headteacher

How GCSEs, AS and A levels will be awarded in summer 2021



Ofqual/21/6751/

| Working out your grade | Evidence | Results and appeals |
|--|---|--|
|  Graded by teacher judgement |  Mocks, tests and work already done can be used as evidence |  Results days AS and A level 10 August GCSE 12 August |
|  Not graded by an algorithm |  Non-exam assessment should continue |  If you're unhappy with your grade, you can appeal it. First step is to submit an appeal to your school or college. |
|  School and college assessments can continue |  Non-exam assessments can be used as evidence even if incomplete | |
|  You'll only be assessed on what you've been taught |  Art & design grade based only on your portfolio | <p>You can find out more details from your school, college or exam board, or by visiting the Ofqual website</p>  www.gov.uk/ofqual |
|  Your teacher will tell you what evidence is used to grade you |  Teachers can use question banks provided by exam boards if they want to | |
|  Private candidates to work with a school, college or exam centre to provide evidence for them to be graded |  Results will be based on completed and future work, so keep doing your best | |