



Friday 3rd April

Dear Parents of Year 11,

Awarding of GCSE Grades – Summer 2020

Today the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (*Ofqual*) published further guidance to schools, parents and students, regarding the awarding of GCSE grades to Year 11.

We are aware that this is national news today so this is simply to acknowledge that we have received it and have begun to interpret it.

The deadline for our submissions is not until 29th May, which means that even if we have not returned to school by then, there is plenty of time for us to get the completed mocks gathered up and marked, and added to the vast amount of evidence we already have in school.

Please remember, the judgements we were already making in school were always based on a wide range of factors, and all of these will be taken into account when reaching a conclusion.

For those of you keen to know more detail, the following points are summarised from the guidance to help you and your son / daughter make sense of the process:

- Schools will be asked to provide a single 'centre assessed grade' per student per subject, that should reflect a fair and objective judgement of the grade they believe a student would have achieved had they sat their exams this year.
- It is important that schools and colleges take into account the full range of available evidence when they grade students - including non-exam assessment; the results of any homework assignments or mock exams; and any other records of student performance over the course of study.
- Schools will then be asked to rank order the students within each grade boundary (which can be quite a broad spread) in order to allow the examination boards more information when they apply the centre assessed grades into their statistical models.
- The Head of Centre, Mrs Gwinnett, will then have to confirm the centre assessed grades and to confirm that the process that has been undertaken to produce them was as accurate and evidence based as it could be.
- The examination boards will then take the centre assessed grades and apply them to statistical models (i.e. the national student ability profile, the previous results of the school cohort from key stage 2 and the previous results of the schools GCSE grades). This MAY result in a change to some of the grades awarded by the schools.
- **Students and parents CANNOT be told the centre assessed grade or ranking judgement prior to the final release of grades**, which is scheduled to be prior to the original GCSE results day previously published as 20th August.
- The normal arrangements for reviews of marking and appeals will not apply.
- Students who feel that the Summer 2020 GCSE grades awarded in the summer do not reflect their ability will have the opportunity to take their exams in the autumn series or in summer 2021. If they choose to do this, both grades will stand (i.e they will have two results).

So what does that mean for the practice exams that Year 11 will have sat since the schools closed on 20th March?

- These papers will be returned to school after the restrictions on non-essential journeys have been lifted to be marked and taken into account as additional evidence
- Teachers are fully aware that some students will have adhered strictly to the exam regulations at home and some may not, they know their students, so please don't be concerned about this
- These papers will only form part of the evidence towards the centre assessed grades awarded

Please remember, we have worked with and known your son / daughter over the last 4 and a half years and will assure you that the grades we award will reflect a fair and objective judgement of the grade we believe a student was likely to achieve had they sat their exams this year.

We will do our utmost to ensure that no student will be disadvantaged by the cancellation of the summer GCSE exams.

As we have said in our parent updates, we will not be responding to emails until after 20th April and any calls into the school office about Year 11 predicted grades during what would have been the Easter break will not be deemed urgent. Please be patient.

We are summarising this information to teachers as well, as they have also been very anxious on your behalf. We are impressing upon them as well that this is for information only at this stage and we will not be doing any work on it until after 20th April.

This is, of course, a completely unprecedented (that word again!) situation and we are devastated to have been robbed of these final months with our Year 11 students. But once again, please be reassured. When your children joined us in Year 7 we committed to get to know them as individuals and we have. We know their strengths, their foibles, their pitfalls and their potential. We will fight to make sure they get what they should have. And when all of this is a distant memory, what we will remember is the laughter and the anecdotes and the memories from the whole of their time with us, from Year 6 induction, right up the amazing prom we will have, hopefully in the not too distant future.

In the meantime, try and rest as a family over the coming fortnight, engage in the activities we are suggesting and be thankful that you don't have the stress of nagging them to revise for exams which are no longer looming.

Our kindest regards and best of health to you all,

Mrs Gwinnett
Executive Head

Miss Bacon
Director of School Improvement

Mr Lewis
Head of School