

Friday 26th February 2021

Dear Year 11 Students, Parents and Carers

RE: GCSE Examinations 2021

I am writing to share further information about the grading of GCSEs this year following the announcements made yesterday by the Department for Education and Ofqual.

Full details of the respective announcements and the consultation decisions can be found here:

[Department for Education - Teacher assessed grades for students](#)

[Ofqual – How qualifications will be awarded in 2021](#)

[Decisions on how GCSE, AS and A level grades will be determined in summer 2021](#)

The last twelve months have been an undoubtedly stressful time for students. There has been a great deal of uncertainty, and many have missed out, not just on teaching and learning, but on the support offered by face-to-face contact with fellow students, friends, family and employers.

Therefore, I am pleased that the government has decided to trust teachers this year in terms of grading students and that there is no planned return of the algorithm used last year. It was also heartening to see that over 100,000 students responded to the consultation, the largest ever of its kind.

Key Points:

- Students will not sit exams as usual
- Grades will be determined by teacher assessment based on a range of evidence
- Exam boards will provide support materials to schools to assist with grading
- Schools will confirm that all the correct procedures have been followed
- Exam boards will have quality assurance processes in place to ensure grades are fair
- Schools will submit their grades to the exam boards by 18th June
- Results Day will be on Thursday 12 August – further details will follow

Sources of Evidence:

The exam boards will respond to the consultation decisions and release further information over the coming weeks. Ofqual have stated the following:

"Teachers will be able to use evidence about your performance gathered throughout your course to inform their judgement. This might include work that you have already completed, mock exam results, homework, or in-class tests. Your teachers may also use questions from exam boards, largely based on past papers, to help assess you, but this won't be compulsory. Reasonable adjustments should be taken into account if you have a disability."

Oak Academy

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Appeals Process:

Students will be able to appeal their grade if they do not feel that this represented a fair grade.

There will be further details to follow regarding appeals but the immediate wording released states:

"A student unhappy with their grade would submit an appeal to the school or college, so that they could check whether an administrative error had been made. If a centre does find an error in the grade submitted, it can submit a revised grade for the board to consider. If a centre does not believe an error had been made, the centre will appeal to the exam board on the student's behalf, and will be supported to do so."

What this means for students:

The most important thing for students is to continue to engage fully with their education, both remotely and when we return to face to face education. The Ofqual wording that explains the rationale for the decisions made is again helpful here:

"The arrangements for this year are designed so that teaching and learning can continue for as long as possible, so your teachers' judgement of your work should take place as late in the academic year as is practical. It's important that you keep engaged in your learning and study as long as possible so that your hard work can be considered in your grade. And it will stand you in good stead for the next stage of your life. Teachers will tell you which pieces of work will count towards your grade, before your grade is submitted to the exam board"

Finally...

I hope that this information is helpful and clarifies the current situation with exams for 2021.

We are really looking forward to students returning to us, which begins next week with lateral flow testing.

When we return to face to face education, we will ensure that students are given the support and opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills as part of the evidence for their grade in each subject.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need more information.

Yours sincerely,



Richard Burgas
Principal