

15 March 2021

Dear Parent, Carer and Student,

I am writing to update you about the awarding of grades this summer.

As I write, schools have still not been given final guidance on how grades will be awarded this summer, but we feel it is only fair that we inform you of our initial plans based on the **draft** guidance that has been given to us.

Schools have been asked to submit grades to the exam boards in June. These grades will be quality assured internally by the school, using a rigorous process that will have to be signed off by the exam boards. Exam boards will then quality assure these grades externally, which may include random sampling of our evidence base for these grades. Once exam boards are happy with the accuracy of our submissions, the exam board will then award students their final grades.

In the draft guidance, teachers have been asked to assess students using “*evidence of a student’s performance from throughout the course... including evidence produced in the coming months*”. Teachers will use a range of evidence to assess students, some of which has already been produced as part of the course and some of which will be produced between now and June.

This evidence may include:

- Key pieces of work in some subjects
- Any coursework (NEA) that has been completed or partially completed (where applicable)
- Mock exams and/or assessments already completed
- Teacher estimates from throughout the year
- In-class assessments that will take place after Easter, some of which may include materials released by the exam boards at Easter

We expect to be able to provide students with a detailed list of evidence for each subject as soon as possible after Easter and students will be able to see their evidence folders before they are made available to exam boards for inspection.

We feel that it is only fair that students are given the opportunity to show their teachers what they have learned and what knowledge and skills they have acquired as a result of their hard work. This was something that was not available to students who were due to sit examinations in 2020. Therefore, students will sit in-class assessments in

most subjects in the first six weeks after the Easter holidays. These assessments will contain a broad range of content covered and will be based on exam board materials.

Teachers will let students know what topics they should revise over the Easter holidays as soon as possible. Students can use the revision materials given to them before Christmas to help them with this. After Easter, our 'Period 4' programme will recommence in order to support students with preparing for their in-class assessments.

I would like to stress that these in-class assessments will form **part** of the evidence for grades, **not all** of it. Equally, we will not base results entirely on work or assessments students have already done. Students will have further opportunities to demonstrate what they know and what they can do through these in-class assessments.

Please be assured that students will be treated fairly and none of our students will be disadvantaged by not taking exams as normal. This includes where students have to isolate, or where they are currently shielding on advice from their GP as part of the current national restrictions.

In the meantime, students should continue to work hard, act on feedback from their teachers and revise content already learned in order to give themselves the best possible chance of maximising their grades in the summer.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact either your Head or House or me to discuss them.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Loftus', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Loftus  
Vice Principal