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16 April 2021

Dear students, parents and carers,

We are writing to you to explain final arrangements for the awarding of grades for Year 11 and Year 13 students this summer. As you are aware, we have been waiting for final guidance from OFQUAL and the JCQ. This guidance has now been published and we have been able to finalise our arrangements. At the end of this letter, is a link to a guide for students and parents from the JCQ. The guides contain full details of the process and how any appeals will operate. Please familiarise yourself with this information.

Schools across the country have been asked to determine “teacher assessed grades” which will be submitted to the exam boards, who will then award official grades to students. The guidance states:

Teachers can assess you based on:

- ***Records of your performance on the content you have been taught over the entire course of your studies.***
- ***Non-exam assessment, often referred to as coursework or internal assessments, even if you have not fully completed it***
- ***Work you have produced in tasks set by your school or college that reflects the specification, format and marking of exam boards. This could include substantial classwork, homework, internal tests or mock exams.***

In addition to this, it states:

- ***Schools and colleges also have the option to set tests for you in order to gather further evidence.***
- ***Importantly, these tests are not formal exams, nor are they designed to play the role of exams. Your teachers do not need to assess you on every aspect of each subject. They just need a range of evidence that shows your performance on the aspects you have been taught.***

You will now be aware, that in each subject, students will be taking some tests over the next few weeks and the results of these tests will form part of the evidence used in determining grades. Attached to this letter is a series of FAQs about the process for these assessment tests.

We will provide every student with an overview of the evidence we will be using to determine the teacher assessed grades in the coming weeks.



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The guidance states:

- ***In most cases, the range of evidence that your teachers use to inform your grade will be consistent across your class or cohort for each qualification. However, your school or college may decide that a different range of evidence may be more appropriate to fairly inform your grade, if, for example, you have missed significantly more teaching than others in your class.***

Once we have given you the overview of evidence we are using, if you have any concerns about the evidence being used, for example through additional significant disruption to teaching in comparison with other students or prolonged illness, please let us know.

All key staff involved in this process will have undergone training on the awarding process, including training on objectivity and bias.

It is absolutely vital that all schools across the country apply the procedures for awarding grades fairly and equitably and that staff, students and parents are aware of their obligations. The guidance states:

- ***"Students might attempt to gain an unfair advantage during the centre's process by, for example, submitting fabricated evidence or plagiarised work. Such incidents would constitute malpractice and centres are asked to report these to the appropriate awarding organisation in the normal way"***
- ***"Students, or individuals acting on behalf of a student, such as parents/carers, might also try to influence grade decisions by applying pressure to centres or their staff. The awarding organisations anticipate that the majority of such instances will be dealt with by the centre internally – in such cases, we ask that the centres retain clear and reliable records of the circumstances and the steps taken, and that students are made aware of the outcome. However, if a student continues to inappropriately attempt to pressure centre staff then please inform the relevant awarding organisation".***

While we believe fully in our students' honesty and integrity, we have a duty to ensure that students understand the seriousness of plagiarism and that nobody engages in communication or behaviour that could be seen as applying pressure to centre staff.

JCQ Guide for Students and Parents

[JCQ-Guidance-for-Students-and-Parents-on-Summer-2021.pdf](#)

We hope we have given you all the information you need regarding the grading process. It remains vital that all students continue to work as hard as they can in this final stretch. We remain enormously impressed with our students and proud of their resilience, determination, hard-work and good behaviour throughout this incredibly challenging time. Please be assured that we are doing, and will continue to do, everything we can to ensure that all students are treated fairly this summer.



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Wishing all the very best to you and your families.

Yours faithfully,

Handwritten signature of Jonny Uttley in black ink.

Jonny Uttley
CEO

Handwritten signature of Scott Ratheram in black ink.

Scott Ratheram
Executive Principal

Student and Parent Guide to Assessments Summer 2021



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FAQs

Will I receive a timetable?

Assessments will take place during normal lesson time. This means students will sit assessments at different times depending on when their lessons fall. For this reason, each student will be told by their teacher when their assessments for each subject will be. There is no centralised timetable as there would be for exams.

What will my assessments be on?

JCQ guidance confirms that assessments need to be broad, covering as much of the content and assessment objectives as possible for each subject. To maintain this breadth, and to ensure fairness for all, students will be given guidance on broad areas of focus for their assessments, as would be the case for exams.

Are the assessments the same as those set by other schools?

Some of the assessment will match those used in other schools. This is because exam boards are providing the same materials to all schools. However, schools do have flexibility in the assessment materials that can be used so it is unlikely that assessments used in our school will exactly match those of other schools nationally.

What if I miss an assessment?

Where possible we will look to make arrangements for students to sit any missed assessments at a later time within the assessment window, which runs until May half term. Where this is not possible, an assessment judgment and grade may still be issued if sufficient alternative evidence is available.

Do my grades depend on these assessments?

These assessments will help to validate the judgements made in determining grades for students. They are one of a number of pieces of evidence that can be used for this purpose and are one part of wider process of generating grades which has been set nationally by JCQ and is being overseen and quality assured by exam boards. Students will be made aware of the assessment evidence being used to support decisions on grades in each subject area.

I have an exam concession. Will I still receive this?

As these assessments are not official exams, there is no specific concession process. However, all exam concessions are based on normal classroom and working practices and should reflect a student's normal way of working. For this reason, any normal provision that is made in lessons to support students will equally apply to these assessments.



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When will the assessments finish?

The assessment window runs until the May half term. Further details on arrangements for students after this time will be published soon.

Will I need to return to school after the assessments are complete?

Schools have been asked to consider how we can support student transition into their next stage of learning or employment, given the disruption of the past year. We are currently working on plans for additional support for students once the assessment window is complete.

What help will I be given to prepare for the assessments?

Students have been given confirmation of the content removed from each subject area, as well as revision resources in many subjects. Period 4 lessons have also restarted and will run every night. The twilight bus is available for students throughout the coming half term.



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