



19th April 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to update you on the arrangements being made to support our students and ensure that grading in 2021 is fair and consistent. We are seeking to adhere to the government's intended outcome that grades in 2021 should be no easier or harder to achieve than in previous years, and that the grades awarded reflect evidence of each "student's knowledge, skills and abilities in relation to the subject content that they have been taught".

The full guidance for Students and Parents from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) can be found by following the link below. This letter is intended to summarise that guidance and highlight the key points for you.

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

Our staff in school are working with students to ensure every student has a range of assessment evidence that will reflect their knowledge, skills and abilities in relation to the subject content they have been taught. These grades can only reflect the evidence staff have available to them and can not incorporate any element of 'prediction'.

Access arrangements can and will be applied for those students who require these adjustments to assessment. If they were not applied to prior assessment that forms part of the evidence staff are considering, then this will be noted and factored into the overall grading decision.

The use of evidence is flexible, so if a student misses a specific assessment then alternative evidence can be considered providing it is a fair and valid alternative to the missed assessment. As a result, 'special considerations' will not normally apply. Where a temporary illness, a temporary injury or some other event outside of the student's control may have affected their performance in assessments which will be used to determine a grade, parents can request that this is taken into consideration. This will be very rare as the evidence considered is flexible and special considerations cannot be applied due to lost learning as stipulated by the JCQ guidance.

The final grade that teachers submit to exam boards will have gone through a process of checking and quality assurance, both internally within our school and with subject specialist colleagues from across CMAT, our family of 10 secondary schools.

Timeline for Students

This half-term we have scheduled various condensed assessment opportunities for students to demonstrate appropriate evidence of their knowledge, skills and abilities.

These assessments are in lessons, they allow time for exam access arrangements and are spread across the half term. Students have being briefed by teachers on when assessments will be and the kind of topics they might cover and we sent a copy of the overview of these assessments home prior to the Easter holiday.

Year 11 pupils cease to be of compulsory school age on Friday 25th June 2021; this represents no deviation from standard practice during a normal academic year and exam period.

All schools are required to submit 'Teacher Assessed Grades' to the exam boards for Year 11 and Year 13 by Friday 18th June, it will likely take up to a week to upload the grades to exam boards as we have to do each grade individually.

All Year 11 and Year 13 students will continue to receive their usual timetabled education provision in school up to and including Friday 28th May (the exact details for the final day of term will be released shortly).

All Year 11 and Year 13 students **must be available to attend school** during normal timetabled school hours upon request from Monday 7th June to Friday 18th June. This may be to review, complete or update any assessments in support of the evidence needed for 'Teacher Assessed Grades', or for other educational activities linked to progression or preparation for the next phase.

Sharing grading of work:

We cannot share the final grade we submit to the exam boards. This is stipulated by JCQ and the Exam boards and is as a result of the external quality assurance that will take place after we submit grades on 18th June which could lead to further changes.

We will not be 'grading' individual assessments as this can be misleading for students and parents. The overall grade is a holistic judgement; this means that it is not possible to provide representative grades on one individual assessment. Numerical marks can and will be shared from individual assessments, and they may contribute to the final overall judgement which is made when all the evidence is drawn together.

Results Days

Results will be released in August with students receiving grades through statements of results from exam boards which can hopefully be collected from school in the normal way. Grades will be presented in the normal way depending on the course ranging from U up to A*/9/Distinction* for example.

Results will be released for Year 13 Students on Tuesday 10th August and for Y11 students on Thursday 12th August.

Appeals

There are three stages of appeal, that will take place throughout August to October:

1. Centre review – a student will ask the centre to check whether it made an administrative or procedural error. If so, the centre will request the grade is changed.
2. Awarding Organisation appeal – must be submitted by centres on behalf of the candidates if the candidate wants it.
3. Ofqual Exam Procedures Review Service – if the candidate thinks the awarding organisation did not follow correct procedures.

The grounds for appeals at Stage 2 (AO appeal) are:

- the centre did not follow its own policy;
- the centre did not undertake internal QA;



- the centre did not allow access arrangements; the AO made an administrative error;
- the centre did not exercise reasonable academic judgement in the selection of evidence or the determination of the grade.

At every stage, a student's result could go up or down.

The deadline for Appeals to the Centre is the 16th August for Priority Appeals and 3rd September for non-priority Appeals. Priority Appeals are those that could impact upon whether a student meets a University offer. The [JCQ guidance](#) includes a helpful timeline and more detail on appeals.

We recognise this is a concerning and difficult time for all our students, their families and our staff. We are committed to doing everything we can to support one another and ensure all our students receive grades that are fairly and consistently awarded.

Our staff are undertaking training this half term to standardise and quality assure their assessment, working with colleagues from across our family of ten secondary schools in CMAT and exam boards. The grades students receive will be a holistic judgement based on the assessment evidence available to teachers and reviewed against the published grade descriptors.

We are confident that our staff will make fair and reasoned judgements working with their colleagues within the school and across the trust. It is important that they are given the time and space to do this. Any communication or interaction that could be construed as trying to influence staff in the awarding of grades will have to be reported to the exam boards and could impact on the final grade awarded, so we would encourage parents to consider any requests carefully. For our students, it is crucial that we remain positive and ensure they can demonstrate fully their capabilities.

Whilst lockdown has been challenging for all of us, we remain incredibly proud of the hard work and commitment demonstrated by our students and remain confident that this will be reflected in their grades this summer. Should you have any concerns or questions about the process please do not hesitate to get in touch with your child's form tutor in the first instance.

Yours faithfully

Simon Warburton
Principal