

08/02/2021

Dear Year 13 Students (and Parents for information),

A Level Grades 2021 – Tests and Assessments

As we approach the half-term break, schools across the country continue to wait for guidance from the exams regulator Ofqual about how grades will be determined this year. You may be aware that Ofqual and the DfE recently received almost 100,000 responses to a consultation on how A level grades would be awarded. Ofqual are due to announce the results of the consultation in the week beginning Monday 22 February. Very shortly thereafter, we expect to be in a position to tell you exactly how your grades will be calculated this year.

At the moment, therefore, it is impossible to give you precise information about how your grades will be determined. Based on the proposals in Ofqual's consultation and on our experience of submitting Centre Assessment Grades last year, however, we believe it is likely that tests and assessments carried out under controlled exam conditions will be a significant factor in determining the grades we submit to the exam boards your behalf. This is because the results of these tests, achieved under conditions as close as possible to the conditions in a real public exam, are judged to be one of the most reliable and fairest measures of a student's attainment level.

In January, when schools went into lockdown, we decided not to proceed with the Mock Exams because we were unable to run them under strict controlled conditions. Since then, the government has indicated that schools may start to reopen from Monday 8 March. This will be dependent on the success of the vaccination programme and a continuing decline in the number of coronavirus cases nationwide. The government has not specified which year-groups might return to school first, but if Year 13 students return in early March, it is our intention to run a full series of tests and assessments, under controlled conditions, starting as soon as possible after your return to school.

The prospect of important assessments in a month's time will undoubtedly shape the work you do at school over the next few weeks. Revision should also be part of your preparation. A full timetable of your assessments will be released as soon as the government confirms the date that Year 13 are returning to school.

We appreciate these are challenging and sometimes frustrating times for you – especially with so much depending on the results of your A levels. We will continue to do our best to support you to get the grades to move on to the next stage of your life and education.

Yours sincerely,

James Eve
Assistant Headteacher