

Copy of the text from the slides for Year 11 assembly 15/04/21

Information regarding GCSEs

Year 11 - welcome back. What's next?

Nothing has changed since I shared the information with you on Monday 8th March.

- Each subject will set smaller, more frequent assessments, in class, to gather information on your learning, knowledge and skills.
- You will know what topic, paper, subject that you are being assessed on, but not the questions or detail.
- You will only be assessed on aspects that your teachers are happy that you have been 'confidently taught' in lessons.
- You will have revision lessons leading up to each assessment.
- You will know when each assessment is and that each assessment counts towards determining your final grade.
- You will get marks (raw scores) for your assessments and, once we get more details from the exam boards we will tell you what those numbers mean and how they compare to a grade.

BUT...

(big caveat...)

If you get grades 6,7,4,6,7... this doesn't mean a 6 (mean or mode) or 7 (highest or mode)

- These grades are what we call 'notional grades' – they are only a grade for that specific aspect of the assessments that you complete.
- You can not use these grades to determine an exact final grade, by adding them up, or averaging them, as different assessments carry more weight –have more impact on your overall grade. However, they can help to give you an idea of how you are performing.
- We have to judge all of your evidence from the assessments together and determine a holistic grade, using grade descriptors provided by the exam boards.

How will you determine our final grades?

- From March 8th –May 28th you are completing exam board assessments. **These will be the main basis for your results.**
- If these are completed you will have covered a significant amount of the GCSE specification and we will have sufficient evidence to grade you.
- You have no less chance of achieving grades this year than any other.
- In fact you are at an advantage as the assessments are broken down into more manageable assessments.

Why these assessments?

- We can assess you as late as possible in Year 11 when you have had the most opportunity to learn and revise.
- We can ensure that all lessons that you are taught before the exams are consistent- it doesn't depend on whose class you are in.
- We can ensure that you all sit the same exams in the same conditions. We can ensure that the work is 'authentic' –that it is your work, and that you haven't used notes, parents, tutors, the internet etc. Therefore we have decided these are the fairest assessments to use for you all.
- We can ensure that all teachers are involved in standardising before they mark your assessments. *Standardising means that all teachers are trained how to mark each question in exactly the same way.*
- We can ensure that all Heads of Department then moderate the marking afterwards. *Moderating means that the Head of Department checks the marking of all of the assessments through sampling a number of students in all groups to check that the marking is fair and consistent across the department.*
- 6. We can also ensure that marking doesn't consider any other qualities of a student such as their work ethic, behaviour etc by marking 'blind'. *Blind marking is when all teachers will mark your work with just candidate numbers so there cannot be any consideration of bias.*

What about my Autumn predicted grade?

We cannot use your predicted grade because it wasn't a 'working at' grade and includes a sense of professional judgement of what you most likely would have achieved. However, there shouldn't be any reason why you are lower than the Autumn grade if you work hard and many people exceed these predictions.

What about my mock exam?

We will not use your mock exam as a main piece of evidence as they weren't sat by all students in the same conditions due to some students self-isolating at home. Also the government announced in December that these would not be used. Since it has been recommended that these are not used if detrimental to students. Therefore we cannot apply these as a consistent method of assessment across the cohort. Also, most people improve from their mock grade.

The most important information...

- **Attendance.**

Having the full range of assessment evidence will put you in the strongest position to achieve your best results.

Attendance

- You know that attendance massively impacts on success as we've shared before. Those with the highest attendance always achieve the most above the target grades, as a group.
- Well done those with excellent attendance! Your names will appear on the screen and you have had 100% attendance since returning after lockdown. (*random 12 selected for prizes*)
- 147/212 students!

If you miss assessments, we have less to use to make judgements for your grades.

Attendance is the single most important requirement and commitment that you need to make.

Can I resit if I miss an assessment?

No. Unfortunately because then you would miss other lessons.

What role do the exam boards play?

- They will check our policy and check that they are happy with our processes.
- They will check that we have set appropriate assessments.
- They will check that we have set them in consistent ways.
- They will check our processes of standardisation and moderation to be confident that they are accurately marked.
- They will look at some work to check it is marked accurately.
- They will challenge us if they don't believe it is accurate.
- They will also ask us for explanations if the results are higher than usual.
- If they are happy with this they will NOT change your grades.

Can you tell us our final grades?

- No. This is considered malpractice.
- We can share the grades/marks that will contribute but not the final submitted grade.
- Please do not ask your teacher to share that information.

Results Day

Results day will be **Thursday 12th August.**

What if I'm unhappy with my grade?

Hopefully you won't be but every year many people are exceptionally happy with their results and some students are disappointed.

Can I appeal my results?

Yes, but there are specific reasons for doing this.

You can't appeal because you are disappointed or unhappy with your grade.

Why can I appeal?

Stage 1: A Centre Review

If you don't think you have been issued with the correct grade, you can appeal to your school or college, who will review whether they:

- made an administrative error, e.g. they submitted an incorrect grade; they used an incorrect assessment mark when determining your grade.
- did not apply a procedure correctly, e.g. they did not follow their Centre Policy, did not undertake internal quality assurance, did not take account of access arrangements or mitigating circumstances, such as illness.

Stage 2: appeal to the exam board

If you still don't think you have the correct grade after the centre review is complete, you can ask your school or college to appeal to the exam board, who will review whether:

- the school or college made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the choice of evidence from which they determined your grade and/or in the determination of your grade from that evidence. A reasonable judgement is one that is supported by evidence. An exercise of judgement will not be unreasonable simply because a student considers that an alternative grade should have been awarded, even if the student puts forward supporting evidence. There may be a difference of opinion without there being an unreasonable exercise of judgement. The reviewer will not remark individual assessments to make fine judgements but will take a holistic approach based on the overall evidence.
- the school or college did not apply a procedure correctly, e.g. they did not follow their Centre Policy, did not undertake internal quality assurance, did not take account of access arrangements or mitigating circumstances, such as illness.
- the exam board made an administrative error, e.g. they changed your grade during the processing of grades.

Results of appeals

At both stages of the process you will need to submit your appeal to your school or college and give them your written consent to conduct the appeal or submit it to the exam board on your behalf. It's important to remember that your grade can **go down, up or stay the same** through either stage of the process.

Will I need to appeal?

We are confident that you will not need to appeal because you should have a good understanding of how you are performing and what you have been assessed on.

Lots of details but...

Your responsibility

- If you need to raise concerns regarding your absence or your understanding of the course, or any missed learning, you need to speak to your teacher or form tutor.
- We will soon be asking all Year 11 students to sign a declaration that states how you will ensure that you do assessments properly and inform us of any issues arising.

The main message is...

- You have an excellent opportunity now to do your best and achieve your best.
- Work hard but manage your workload sensibly to keep focussed.
- Remember that by the 28th May, you've finished and have no more assessments!
- Leaving date to follow.
- Your teachers will do the very best for you throughout this period.

And the good news...Prom

- We have 140 of you confirmed for Prom – thank you for paying so promptly.
- It is looking good, but we still need another 10 people to sign up so please ask your parents/carers to pay on Parent Pay tonight! Deadline Friday 16th April.
- If finances are an issue, please ask your parents/carers to contact the office as we will do our best to help.
- We are really looking forward to putting on an amazing Prom for you to give you the send-off you really deserve!