



16 March 2021

Dear Parents & Carers,

Further to the letter I sent earlier this month about the awarding of grades this summer, I thought I should write to you again before the Easter holidays to provide you with some more up-to-date information hopefully to reassure you and your son or daughter. We are unfortunately still in the unsatisfactory position of waiting for detailed information from exam boards; they have informed us that they will provide schools with support materials by the end of March and we are expecting this to include samples of further assessment materials and guidance about assessment procedures. In the absence of these details, we have moved ahead with our planning for assessing students to enable us to make evidence-based decisions of the standard at which students are performing.

The School is developing procedures to ensure that the grades we submit to the exam boards will, as far as is reasonably possible, accurately represent the attainment for each of our students. This will involve a consistent approach for all students within each subject and refer to their attainment in three main areas: mock exam performance; Non-Examined Assessments (NEAs) where relevant; further classroom-based assessments that have followed the same format as exam board materials.

For the latter component, we can confirm that there **will** be assessments next term for all Year 11 and Year 13 students in all subjects in the weeks from 12 April 2021 to 21 May 2021, and that these **will** contribute to the grades the School submits for every student. These assessments will make sure that we have had the opportunity to assess students on the full, broad range of content they have been taught in each subject. We can also confirm that students will only be assessed on content that has been taught. We will start to publish the dates of these assessments early next term. For your further information about this period, students may also be taught new subject content next term whilst also receiving support and guidance to prepare for forthcoming assessments.

During the summer term there will be **no** exams held in the School Hall. All assessments will be held in the context of the classroom under formal supervision. We will aim, where possible, to give students up to two weeks' notice for any of these assessments. The timeframe for undertaking further assessments is limited, having been determined by the date provided by the Government for provision of final grades to exam boards. The School will make reasonable adjustments to the programme where possible, but there may well be busy periods for students taking these further assessments.

As would always be the case at this time of year, staff would be recommending that students schedule time for a significant period of consolidation and revision over the Easter break and the subsequent weeks. Students should prepare to be assessed in the summer term on everything that has been covered in their courses, including content previously assessed in mock exams. Therefore, we recommend that students continue to revise **all** remaining content that has not yet been examined **as well as** content covered in their mock exams so they are able to demonstrate attainment and progress in these areas.

We appreciate that for Year 13 students, they will only have just completed their mock exams at the end of the spring term and they will not receive feedback until early in the summer term. However, prior to that time, they should reflect on their own self review of their experiences when taking the mock exams and build this into their planning.

We would like to reassure parents, carers and students that they will not be disadvantaged should they be expected to isolate during this period. We would ask that students continue to minimise the risk of this by following sensible social distancing and other protective measures both within and outside of School. We are now quite experienced in supporting students working remotely, and we are developing plans to manage the situation should it arise at the time of an assessment; we will provide full support to any isolating student in this situation and in all possible cases we will ensure that students can sit all assessments; wherever possible this will be at the same time as their peers in School.

After the period of course completion and assessment between 12 April 2021 and 21 May 2021 the School will be putting together a programme to support students in their next steps (post-16 and post-18). Further communications will be sent to parents, carers and students about this as soon as we reasonably can, but it may be wise not to book any time away from home during the weeks before the **end** of the summer term until you have received further details about this programme.

To repeat my closing sentences and assurances from previous communications: working within these far from ideal national arrangements, the School will commit to keep all of its students' best interests in mind when determining these grades, and we will do all we can to ensure they are fair, reliable and accurate whilst taking account of all students' individual circumstances.

Yours faithfully,

Mr D Rhodes  
Deputy Headteacher (Academic)