



5 March 2021

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

### Examination grading this summer

Last week Ofqual and the Department for Education released guidance on how examination grades will be awarded this year. To help understand the expectations, we have produced a two-sided summary of all the information that we have received to date which we hope you will find useful. Further information on timings, and resources to support grading will be released by the examination boards later this term. This is therefore just an initial outline of our approach.

In general, grades will be awarded as we anticipated, based on the professional judgement of teachers and internally moderated by senior leaders. This judgement will come from a range of sources, across the whole of the course, although we are still waiting for further detail on the balance between different elements. The important point is that there is not just one thing which dictates the grade. This means that a single very good or very disappointing piece of work (even if it was in the mocks) does not mean that a student will be awarded that grade: this piece of work will provide just one piece of evidence.

You may have heard or read about exam board assessments (mini-exams) being made available for schools to use. We do not yet have the details on these assessments, but I anticipate most subjects that are assessed via examinations will use them as one piece of evidence towards final grading. We will give students as much warning as possible about both the content and the style of the assessments; we will therefore not run these before Easter. It is likely that some of these assessments will take place in the Sports Hall and others in class, depending on the number of students taking the course and the style of the assessment.

Here are some key dates to be aware of:

- Grades need to be submitted by the College to exam boards by 18 June.
- A-Level results will be released on 10 August.
- GCSE results will be released on 12 August.

There will be some form of external moderation by the examination boards, and students will have the right to appeal a grade that they think is unfair. There is a lot of detail that has still not been released on how both of these things will work. The point about moderation is important: our staff cannot artificially inflate grades, first because it would be wrong to do so, and secondly because it may lead to other students' grades being brought down. In this regard, I do need to stress that the grade awarded will not necessarily be the highest grade ever achieved during the course. There is always a temptation to believe that because a recent assessment was graded 7 or A, it means that it is unfair to be given a 6 or a B: a range of evidence will be used to calculate the final grade. We will aim to keep overall grading in line with last year, so that the grade distribution is fair. We are also considering other ways in which we can reduce the risk of any bias in the grading outcomes.

Please bear with us while we read and analyse the information from Ofqual and examination boards. Over the next two weeks, school staff will be meeting to discuss the implementation of the internal protocols necessary for the awarding of grades. We will release more information as soon as we can, and we aim to let students have a timetable of the assessments that they will sit, and the topics to be covered by Easter. In the meantime, please continue to encourage your child to engage fully with their lessons and assignments for the rest of the academic year. This will be vital if they are to receive grades which fully reflect their ability and investment in learning.

Yours sincerely

*W. N. Jenkins*

**Mr WN Jenkins**  
**Headteacher**



