

Dear Year 13 Parent/Carer

We wrote to you previously sharing with you the Ofqual guidance and a broad outline of the process we intend to put in place when determining A Level, Btec and CTEC grades for students this summer. This letter shares with you more details on this process.

For most subjects, grades will be awarded using several pieces of student evidence.

These are:

- The March mock exams;
- Non-Examined Assessment (NEA) / coursework where relevant);
- Up to 4 hours of grade verifying assessments.

For most students this means they will be completing up to 4 hours of Grade Validation Assessments in each subject which will be their final piece(s) of evidence. These will take place the weeks beginning 10 and 17 May, with a contingency period of up to 28 May in case of self-isolation. Students should be available to come into school up to this point. Where subjects would normally have had an NEA (coursework), this will be included in their portfolio of evidence and will be weighted broadly in line with the requirements of the specification. There will be some exceptions to this and the class teacher will advise where the grade will be based on portfolio work only. No **new** syllabus content will be taught from 22 March onwards in almost all subjects. The March mocks may highlight areas for improvement and staff will focus on these areas with students in the remaining class time, allowing students to consolidate their learning in preparation for May assessments.

We want students to have every opportunity to demonstrate their best work. The planned mock exams next week are the start of this. This has been done deliberately to reduce the pressure on students. Unlike in previous years where everything hinged on a high stakes terminal exam, students now have several chances to show their ability. To support students with their preparation, they will all be told the following:

- The nature of the Grade Validation Assessments (GVA) (e.g. essay, structured questions etc.);
- The duration of the assessments;
- Focused area of study to prepare effectively (without being told the specific question);
- All access arrangements will also be accommodated.

Students are only expected to be in school during the days when they have a GVA and are welcome to study from home the rest of the time. Students doing exams must come into school in full school uniform. These should not be viewed as high stakes exams and these assessments are an opportunity to validate the grade. In all likelihood these will either confirm or improve a student's grade. As the evidence portfolio draws on several pieces of evidence, underperforming in one GVA is unlikely to bring their result down; however, performing well can increase their overall grade.

Students will be told which pieces of evidence will be used to determine their grade. They will also be told how they have performed in the March mock exams and in their NEA. **However, students are not permitted to be told their final grade before results day in August.** To ensure a fair and consistent approach, student work will be assessed using a range of methods to prevent any unconscious bias, including:

- Replacing names with candidate numbers on May assessment papers;

- Marking the work from sets taught by another member of the department;
- Moderation of a sample of marking;
- Cross site marking and moderation between KSHS, Carre's and St George's Academy where appropriate.

We believe this will ensure a transparent and equal approach for all students. It is just one of the internal Quality Assurance measures we have in place to prevent any unintended disadvantage and ensure students are awarded the grades of which they are capable.

Departments will be sharing detailed, subject specific, plans with students as soon as the exam boards have shared details with us.

We know how challenging the last 12 months have been for students, but we hope that our proposed process will offer reassurance that students will not be disadvantaged in terms of their grades. They will have ample opportunities to produce evidence that shows their best work and we will continue to offer support and guidance to help them achieve this.

Yours faithfully

N M Law
Headteacher