



Dear Parents / Carers,

We wanted to write to you today to give you a further update about the grading process this year that has replaced exams. Before the Easter break, the JCQ guidance was published and sent to all exam centres. Senior Leaders across the Trust have been working hard to implement this guidance and to work on our plans to ensure that students receive fair grades this summer. Thank you for your patience and understanding whilst we have worked through this guidance and adjusted our planning.

It is important you are aware of this guidance from the JCQ and the important difference between the process last year compared to this year:

*The centre assessment grades used as a basis for final outcomes in June 2020 were based on a different consideration to that for the current series. In June 2020, centres were asked to provide the grade that they considered the student would most likely have achieved had exams taken place. In 2021, grades must be based on the evidence produced by students (JCQ 2021).*

JCQ have published guidance for students and parents with useful information about the process. We would recommend that you read this alongside the information that we send to you. Throughout this process, we are keeping the following principles firmly in mind:

- Clarity of communication – we aim to ensure that our communication to parents and students is clear and easy to understand
- Transparency – we will be open about what we are doing and why we are doing it
- Opportunity – students will have opportunities to show us what they can do
- Fairness – the grades students receive should be a reflection of their performance

The purpose of this letter is to inform you which pieces of work will be used as evidence to inform a student's overall grade. Part one details the assessments that **all subjects can consider** whilst part two gives details of **additional assessments** that are specific to subject areas. These are listed under the subject name.

JCQ criteria for deciding the value of assessments in the grading process:

- Authenticity – is the evidence the student's own work? Students should not have been given inappropriate levels of support to complete it.
- When was the evidence produced – More recent evidence is likely to be more representative of student performance.
- What were students asked to do.



- Centres should aim to use consistent sources of evidence for a class or cohort
- Ensure that the range of assessment covers content that students have been taught over the entire course
- Using assessment that is based on questions and mark schemes or material similar to those used by exam boards
- The level of control the piece of work was produced under (exam conditions for example)
- Marking – how much support was available when applying the mark scheme? What internal standardisation processes have been applied?

### **Important**

Staff will be making a holistic judgement about students' grades that will reflect each student's individual pattern of performance (including the final assessment). Where an assessment is particularly high or low compared with other assessments staff will take this into account. It is important to note that much like exams in normal years, the grades issued will not take into account a student's potential. They will be a snapshot of the standard that the student is performing at based on a wide range of evidence.

Furthermore, the grading regulations this year prevent us from considering target grades and the projected grades shared on progress reports. We will be able to consider the performance of students but we will not be allowed to use the projected grades that were calculated from them.

### **Tiers of entry**

For subjects where there is a tiered examination structure, teachers will use the most recent performance (the assessments taken prior to Easter) to determine the best tier of entry for students. Students will then sit this tier of paper in the final round of assessments (commencing on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021). Where we are recommending changes to tier of entry, this information will be communicated with you before 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

### **Next steps**

You will have the opportunity to raise any concerns about the evidence being used, for example if the evidence was affected by personal circumstances.

Please note that special consideration requests will not apply in the usual way this summer because students will not be taking exams. If you think that performance has been affected by illness or personal circumstances, then you should inform us of this as soon as possible.

Further detail can be found the letter attached – 'Special Consideration & Access Arrangements'.

We are still receiving guidance from individual exam boards and this is informing our detailed planning. If we receive any new guidance that alters our planning we will, of course, keep you informed.

We understand that you may have questions about the process and we are committed to continuing to communicate openly with you. You can contact the office at any time with any queries you have.

Each student in Year 11 will have the opportunity to meet with their College Leader during their timetabled weekly college session. They will have the opportunity to discuss their performance in assessments and to raise any questions or concerns they might have. We will continue to use these sessions to guide students about their next steps for September 2021.

**Finally...**

We understand how difficult this year has been for the students and want to congratulate them for showing such a positive attitude as they approach their final weeks of Year 11.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Butler', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

**Mr D Butler**  
**Principal**

## **Assessments to be included in the grading process**

Staff will consider using the following assessments to make a **holistic** and objective judgement of students' performance. It is important to note again that not all assessments in the list below will be considered of equal value in the grading process. The JCQ criteria above should give you an indication of how we will judge the value of each of the assessments.

The evidence listed in this letter is the range of evidence that teachers may use to determine students' grades. JCQ has stated this year that it is important that final grades reflect **current performance**. Therefore, the assessments taken at the end of the course are going to be the most important in determining the grade that the students are currently working at.

### **Part one**

The following assessments may be considered when deciding on a student's grade.

1. Y9 Autumn Assessment
2. Y9 Spring Assessment
3. Y9 Summer Assessment
4. Y10 Autumn Assessment
5. Y11 Autumn Assessment
6. Y11 Spring Assessment (taken in the window before Easter)
7. Y11 Summer Assessment (taken in the final assessment window, commencing 17<sup>th</sup> May)

These assessments are consistent across all students across the cohort (and in some cases across the Trust).

### **Part two**

Some subjects are considering additional evidence, including practical elements of the course and NEA (Non Exam Assessment) work.

Where subjects are considering additional evidence, this is detailed below under the subject title. If the subject is not listed, then they are only using the range of evidence listed under part one of this letter.

### 3D Art

- A. Component 1 – Coursework

### Art

- A. Component 1 – Coursework

### Computing

- A. NEA Component – Programming project

### Drama

- A. NEA Component – Devising – Practical performance and Log book

### DT

- A. NEA Component 2 – AO1a,b and AO2a

### Enterprise and marketing

- A. Component 1 – Coursework

### Food Preparation and Nutrition

- A. NEA Component 2 – AO3 and AO4

### Graphic communication

- A. Component 1 – Coursework

### Media studies

- A. NEA Component 3 – Creating Media Products

### Music

- A. Component 1 – Performance
- B. Component 2 Composition

### Photography

- A. Component 1 – Coursework

### PE

- A. NEA Components (AEP) – Written coursework
- B. NEA Components (Performance) – Practical performance across two sports

### Sport studies

- A. Unit R052: Developing sport skills
  - a. Recorded practical assessment of one practical sport with written witness statement
  - b. Written assignment (L04)
- B. Unit R054: Sport and the media
  - a. Written assignment (L01-5)