

25 March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Important Information Relating to Y11 & 13 Qualifications 2021

Last month, the Department for Education released further information on the awarding process for GCSE & A Level examinations, for summer 2021. Exam boards will publish the guidance, so schools have a clear understanding of how to make fair and consistent judgements. They will publish requirements for schools' quality assurance processes and will review each school's processes before we are able to submit grades.

Schools are expected to use a range of evidence to make a judgement of the grade a student is performing at. Whilst this may include work completed over the course of study, it is likely that the assessments completed over the coming months, along with key pieces of coursework, will be most representative of a student's performance.

It is, therefore, essential that your child continues to work to the best of their ability over the remainder of the academic year, particularly revising key concepts they have been taught, ahead of any assessments. We will continue to offer them support in a variety of ways as we understand that the covid restrictions and school closures over the last year have been very disruptive. We do, however, continue to be impressed with their attitude and commitment and this is particularly evident with the number of students who have signed up to attend Easter support sessions during their holiday. My thanks to you for encouraging them to get extra help from the staff who are also going beyond expectations by working during the Easter break after a year of national lockdowns.

To assist this process, the exam boards will provide assessment materials at the end of March 2021. We intend using these materials to help us in making consistent judgements of the standard that your child is working at. Some formal assessments will take place in the sports hall from 19 April to 27 April 2021. Other assessments using either the exam board or departmentally generated materials will be completed in class for the remainder of the half term (up to 28th May 2021). The final GCSE grade will reflect the standard at which your child is performing based on a range of evidence. We will be working over the next few months to provide opportunities for all students to demonstrate their ability as well as considering any previous relevant evidence where appropriate.

As indicated in Mr Cameron's previous letter dated 15th March 2021, we have now collated the evidence each subject will be using to assess pupils for their GCSE, A-



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Nick Caulfield – Principal



SELF-WORTH ASPIRE SUCCESS HONESTY

Level, BTEC and Cambridge Technical grades. Most subjects will be using similar types of evidence, so I would like to take the opportunity here to outline a little more about these but draw your attention to Appendix 1 (GCSE) and Appendix 2 (A level/BTEC):

Formal Assessment Opportunity – Evidence gathered during our formal assessment period 19th – 27th April. These assessments will be sat in our Sports Hall in formal exam conditions, the same as those that would be in place for GCSE / A-Level exams. Information about our expectations of conduct during these exams has already been provided, this will be reinforced to the year 11 students in an assembly next week. The assessments will consist of exam style questions from either past papers or other resources provided by the exam boards. This assessment is designed to mirror full exams so most will last between 1 hour 15 minutes and 1 hour 45 minutes.

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – These assessments may be sat in a slightly less formal setting and conducted during class time. They may consist of exam style questions from either past papers or smaller tasks provided by the exam boards. The time allocated to each assessment is variable, it may be much shorter than the Formal Assessment Opportunity, but may take up to the same amount as time (1 hour 45 minutes)

In-class assessments using department created materials – These assessments may be sat in a slightly less formal setting and conducted during class time. They may consist of exam style questions from either past papers or smaller tasks either designed by DPA teachers or sourced from third parties. In all cases the assessments will mirror the content and style of the exam board resources. The time allocated to each assessment is variable, it may be much shorter than the Formal Assessment Opportunity, but may take up to the same amount as time (1 hour 45 minutes)

We hope this overview of the evidence we plan to use to grade this year's GCSE, A-Level, BTEC and Cambridge Technical courses gives you confidence that we are giving our students every chance to prove their knowledge and understanding of the subjects studied. Teachers will provide further details about the final dates and types of assessment they will be delivering directly to the students via the lessons and on the Teams channels for their classes.

The school must be confident that any work used as evidence to support a grade is the student's own and that the student has not been given inappropriate levels of support to complete it, either in school, at home or with an external tutor. Exam boards will investigate instances where it appears that evidence is not authentic. Please be assured that there will be a rigorous, consistent, fair and objective process to determine your child's grades.

Mr Bauckham, Interim Chair of the exams regulator has recently said that the move to inform pupils about the evidence was based on a "principle of transparency", but "does not mean that either the selection of evidence or the decision about the grade

which the evidence supports are somehow topics for negotiation between teacher and student or teacher and parent. They are not.”

“It would be quite wrong and fundamentally unfair both for teachers and students for these decisions to be subject to pressure or interference from those with a vested interest,” he added.

“That would risk discrediting the process and ultimately could end up with young people in destinations for which they are ill-prepared, potentially displacing those better suited to them. We must all, teachers, students and parents, respect the process.”

There are still details of the grading process that have yet to be made clear by Ofqual and the exam boards. If these details, when released, significantly change our published process we will contact you again. A-Level students will receive their results on Tuesday 10 August and GCSE students on Thursday 12 August 2021.

Yours sincerely



Nick Caulfield
Principal



Appendix 1

GCSE Grading Evidence

Biology

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

Business

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

In-class assessments using department created materials – First half of summer term

In class assessments using department created materials – Completed Nov/Dec 2020

Chemistry

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

Combined Science

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

Computer Science

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using department created materials – First half of summer term

Drama

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class exam questions – First half of summer term

Footage of practice rehearsals – Already completed

Scripted monologue Performance Exam – First half of summer term

NEA / Coursework – Deadline 6th April

DT

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

Practical Skills Assessment – First half of summer term

NEA / Coursework – Deadline 21st May

English Language

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class exam questions – First half of summer term

English Literature

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class exam questions – First half of summer term

Fine Art

NEA / Coursework – Final deadline 14th May

Food & Nutrition

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In lesson practical skills assessment – Ongoing, to be completed by 14th May

NEA / Coursework – Deadline 21st May

French

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using department created materials – First half of summer term

Geography

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term



History

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

Maths

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using department created materials – First half of summer term

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

Media Studies

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

NEA / Coursework – Final deadline 7th May

Music

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

Performance assessment – First half of summer term

Composition assessment – First half of summer term

PE

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

Practical Skills Assessment – Already completed

NEA / Coursework – Final deadline 7th May

Photography, Art & Design

NEA / Coursework – Final deadline 14th May

Photography

NEA / Coursework – Final deadline 14th May

Physics

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term



Appendix 2

A-Level & BTEC Grading Evidence

Biology

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

Business Studies

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

Chemistry

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

Drama

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class exam questions – First half of summer term

Footage of practice rehearsals – Already completed

Scripted monologue Performance Exam – First half of summer term

NEA / Coursework – Deadline 6th April

Economics

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

English Language

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

NEA / Coursework – Final deadline 21st May

English Literature

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

NEA / Coursework – Final deadline 21st May

Fine Art

NEA / Coursework – Final deadline 14th May

Further Maths

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using department created materials – First half of summer term

Geography

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

Government & Politics

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

History

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

NEA / Coursework – Already completed

Maths

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using department created materials – First half of summer term

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term



Media Studies

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – Already completed

NEA / Coursework – Final deadline 21st May

Physics

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

Psychology

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

BTEC Business

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

In-class assessments using department created materials – First half of summer term

NEA / Coursework – Final deadline 30th April

BTEC Science

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

NEA / Coursework – Final deadline 7th May

BTEC Sports

Formal Assessment Opportunity – As per timetable

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

NEA / Coursework – Final deadline 17th May

Cambridge Technical - IT

In-class assessments using Exam board resources – First half of summer term

NEA / Coursework – Final deadline 21st May