

Thoughts on how Year 11 and 13 grades may be awarded.

In a year without exams as we know them, how can we achieve a fair assessment of student progress and achievement?



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Ofqual announcements

Ofqual made a statement on Wednesday 6th January

“Our message to students is this: **please continue to engage as fully as you can in your education.** That will be online for the majority of students, or face-to-face for those students still going into their school, college or training provider. This will put you in the best position, whatever arrangements are made for your qualifications. It’s important that teachers and students can focus on the **knowledge and skills needed to equip students to progress to the next stage,** whatever form that might take - whether to college, an apprenticeship, university or employment.”



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DfE and Government announcements

- Education Secretary Gavin Williamson also made an announcement on Wednesday 6th January confirming that **grades for Year 11 and 13 students will be decided by schools** and that “more trust will be placed in the judgement of teachers rather than applying algorithms”. However, schools are **awaiting confirmation of how** the DfE and exam boards want school to make these calculations.
- Following on from this on **Wednesday 13th Gavin Williamson made an announcement** which the BBC reported on a little, in which he mentioned the DfE and exam boards were **considering “mini exams”** (in addition to the data collected by school) based on reduced papers set by the exam boards and sent to schools to complete in school and be marked by teachers and a selection to be sent to the exam boards for moderation, however, **this has not been confirmed and no specific details have been released** by exam boards about how these would run.

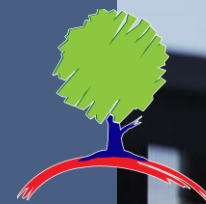


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Frustration for students

- For a lot of students this will be strangely frustrating, as they have been working hard to build up to exams in the summer which they are unlikely to sit! This will leave them some what confused about **what they are meant to be doing instead.**
- This was even more frustrating for students who were ready to sit exams in January and early February, however, the extraordinary circumstances students were in could have significantly impacted on their performance in these exams, which could have prejudiced their overall outcomes, so as a result, in common with many other schools we took the very difficult decision to withdraw the exams.



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Using our experience with CAGs in summer 2020

- **GCSE and A Level Centre Assessed Grades were awarded in summer 2020 for Year 11 and 13 students**
- **Grades were based on a combination of assessed pieces of work including mocks, coursework and unit assessments which students had done prior to lockdown in March.**
- **As the decision has already been made to focus on school assessed grades rather than the usual summer exams, the clear message is that students need to continue to focus on the courses they are doing and to make the most of the current online learning and the work they will be doing when we return to school.**

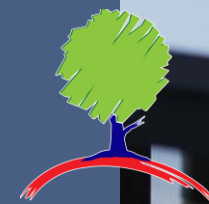


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Learning from our experience with CAGs in summer 2020

- If the DfE and exam boards ask schools to approach this year's grades in a similar way to summer 2020 we will be looking at **several pieces of assessed work across the course and looking at the 'trajectory' students are on** which was building them up towards the grade they would have achieved in an exam.
- We have been recording assessment data throughout the course and will also be **taking into account the progress students have made, taking into account the circumstances under which they have all been studying.**



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Approaching summer 2021 grades

- **Year 11** completed one set of **mocks before Christmas** - most staff have already returned **results and feedback**, some are doing so this week and early next week
- **Year 13** completed **mocks in September** and are **doing a second set of mocks at home over the next two weeks** - each exam has clear instructions and students have a specific time frame to work within (we may consider a similar model for Year 11s if this lockdown is extended beyond February half term - parents will be consulted on this)
- **Live lessons** will continue to include **assessed assignments** which students need to submit to their teachers (please let us know if home technology is limiting access to these lessons)
- **Coursework / portfolios** etc. are still being added to
- Students are **'finishing' their courses**
- SLT and staff are keeping a close eye on **DfE, exam board etc. announcements** and will share any information we get with parents as soon as possible

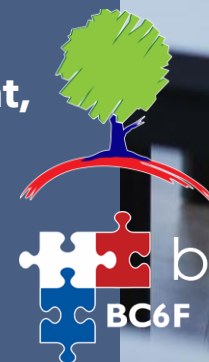


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Quality assurance for teacher assessed grade

- The school has a **moral responsibility** to our own students and to students across the country to ensure that **the grades we submit are as accurate as possible**
- There will be a thorough quality assurance process which will require us provide **evidence to support the grades** we have awarded (however, we are awaiting clarification for this).
- We have to ensure that grades are realistic to avoid of the possibility of grades being adjusted down as a result of moderation.
- The 2020 CAGs were **quality assured at several levels**, including discussion of evidence to support grades between class teachers and their heads of department, the Senior Leadership Team and Headteacher, considering a body of evidence at every stage before submitting them to the exam boards.



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The way forward for our students

At this stage in their lives, students have a *'next step'* to move on to, so students, school, parents & carers must **focus on how** they are going to move onto this next stage in their education or training:

- Teacher assessed grades
- 6th Form applications
- Vocational training for a specific job
- University applications
- Apprenticeships
- Careers advice if they don't know what their next step is



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University Decisions

- **Most students will have until 10th June to make decisions.** Students can, however, make decisions before this once they have heard back from all choices.
- **Some universities have already announced they have lowered entry requirements** - others are likely to follow suit following external UCAS deadline.
- **Contact Undergraduate Admissions at each university to ask about revised entry requirements.**
- **Students can book a meeting with Faye** if any support or advice is needed.



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