



Cotswold Edge Sixth Form



27th April 2021

Dear Year 13 students and Parent/Carer

We are writing to provide you with further information about Cotswold Edge Sixth Form arrangements for the remainder of the academic year, including further details of the Teacher Assessed Grades for students in Year 13. We would again like to reassure you that we are aiming to reduce stress for students as far as possible whilst ensuring we are also meeting the requirements of Ofqual and the examination boards.

In this letter, we will explain:

- a. The types of evidence which may be used to decide an examination grade
- b. Forthcoming assessments
- c. Quality assurance processes
- d. Appeals
- e. Key dates

Potential evidence

Examination boards have asked schools to provide Teacher Assessed Grades for all students who would normally have taken examinations in summer 2021. The grades to be submitted will reflect a fair, reasonable and carefully considered judgement of each student's performance across a range of evidence. However, no pre-defined list of evidence has been published and each school is required to decide how we can fairly and accurately ensure that students are able to achieve a grade which is aligned to the work they have produced and supports individuals to progress with their education, training or employment in future years.

Government guidance states that types of assessment evidence which *could* be used to determine grades *may* include:

1. Student work produced in response to assessment materials provided by exam boards, including groups of questions, past papers or similar materials such as practice or sample papers.
2. Non-exam assessment (NEA) work (often referred to as coursework). This could be completed work or specific sections of the NEA.
3. Student work produced in tasks set by their teachers that reflect the specification, follow the same format as exam board materials and have been marked in a way that reflects exam board mark schemes. This may include internal tests, mock exams, substantial classwork or homework (though tasks done at home are obviously subject to lower degrees of control, and are likely to have a lower weighting)..
4. Records of a student's capability and performance over the course of study in performance based subjects such as art, music, drama and PE.
5. Records of each student's progress and performance over the course of study.

Following the return to school earlier in March, we have been following our normal curriculum and timetables, enabling students to focus on completing and consolidating their learning for each of their courses. It is critical that all students do not throw away any work from their post-16 studies. Later this term teachers will be collecting a bank of evidence for each student, including notes/ folders, completed past papers, files/portfolios; any aspect of work could be used as evidence.

Please see the infographic provided by exam boards copied at the foot of this letter that provides a summary of how GCSEs, AS and A levels will be awarded in summer 2021.

Forthcoming assessments

All grades to be awarded to students will be based on the curriculum content that students have been taught; nobody will be disadvantaged due to lockdown and time spent away from the classroom. We see this as a jigsaw of different pieces of evidence which **may** include any of the above sources (points 1-5).

To support this process, students in Year 13 will continue to take part in assessments during class time and in classrooms. Whilst we anticipate these assessments will be just one part of the jigsaw and students need to prepare well for them, we hope to reduce stress levels by conducting them during regular lesson time. Individual subject teams are already communicating the timings and arrangements for these assessments directly to students.

For those students who are entitled to access arrangements e.g. additional time, this support will be put in place. Should you have any questions or queries relating to access arrangements for your son/daughter, please make direct contact with the relevant Head of Sixth form or SENCo.

Schools are not permitted to share any details of the grades or percentages that are achieved with students and parents/carers. All evidence, on which a student's grade is based, including copies of work, records of assessments and the marks awarded will be retained safely by the school. This evidence will provide the basis of quality assurance processes which will run across the Cotswold Edge consortium. Evidence will be shared with exam boards as required.

We would be grateful for your support at this time and respectfully request that students and parents/carers do not request any specific details of the grades or percentages that have been achieved or lobby staff to guarantee a specific grade is awarded. Cotswold Edge will retain and treat with confidence all information relating to any individual or personal circumstances that have affected a student's performance. Guidance for parents/carers and students produced by JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) can be found on their website or by following the link [here](#).

Quality Assurance

We will ensure that our assessment process is fair and all guidance published by exam boards will be followed. Exam boards will also quality assure the processes in schools by requesting samples of students' grades and the evidence of their assessments, alongside other more targeted checks. Standardisation and moderation procedures are in place and these will guarantee that all approaches for awarding grades are consistent and accurate. Many of the quality assurance processes will be conducted by anonymising items of work to ensure there is no unconscious bias. Samples of evidence and work from students will be quality assured across Cotswold Edge and all grades will then be reviewed by Senior Leaders in June prior to submission by 18th June. Before the grades are uploaded to the exam boards, Headteachers are required to confirm that students have been taught sufficient content to allow progression to the next stage of their education in each of their chosen subjects and that the requirements for internal quality assurance have been met. Overall, please be reassured that this is multi-layered process with many checks in place to ensure accuracy.

Appeals

As in any other year, students will have the right to appeal their grade. Any student who may disagree with the grade awarded will be required to submit an appeal to the school so that we can check whether an administrative error has been made. Appeals will only be possible after grades have been published on results day (please see date below) and should be submitted directly to us in the first instance. Exam boards have stated that they will only revise a student's grade where the evidence cannot reasonably support that grade, rather than as a result of any marginal differences of opinion. Students should also be aware that grades can go up or down as the result of an appeal.

Key dates

Results day for Year 13 students: **Tuesday 10th August.**

The final day for teaching any content that may form part of Year 13 assessed work will be **Friday 28th May 2021. Students are expected to attend lessons until this date.** For a handful of Vocational subjects (Btecs, Ctecs, etc), where the required assessment material has been completed, a separate arrangement may be reached.

Whilst we anticipate the final day of year 13 teaching will be Friday 28th May, please be aware that the final grades are not due for submission to the exam boards until Friday 18th June. **Students must be available, should we need to contact them or invite them in, until Friday 18th June.**

Please be reassured that the grades students receive this summer will look exactly the same as in previous years. They will have equal status with colleges, employers and in due course, universities, to help students as they progress in their education or towards future destinations.

As is the case in every year, it is essential that all students maintain a strong work ethic and continue to apply themselves with rigour between now and the end of May. We will be using work produced between now and 28th May to help build the 'jigsaw' of evidence and for some individuals, they will produce their best work over the coming weeks.

We hope the above information is helpful and provides some clarity for this complex issue. As always, should you have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch with the relevant Head of Sixth Form.

Yours sincerely,



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Brimsham Green School



Gillian Hilleard
Head of Sixth Form
Chipping Sodbury School



Patrick Bolster
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Yate Academy

How GCSEs, AS and A levels will be awarded in summer 2021

ofqual

Ofqual/21/6751/2

Working out your grade	Evidence	Results and appeals
 Graded by teacher judgement	 Mocks, tests and work already done can be used as evidence	 Results days AS and A level 10 August GCSE 12 August
 Not graded by an algorithm	 Non-exam assessment should continue	 If you're unhappy with your grade, you can appeal it. First step is to submit an appeal to your school or college.
 School and college assessments can continue	 Non-exam assessments can be used as evidence even if incomplete	You can find out more details from your school, college or exam board, or by visiting the Ofqual website
 You'll only be assessed on what you've been taught	 Art & design grade based only on your portfolio	
 Your teacher will tell you what evidence is used to grade you	 Teachers can use question banks provided by exam boards if they want to	
 Private candidates to work with a school, college or exam centre to provide evidence for them to be graded	 Results will be based on completed and future work, so keep doing your best	 www.gov.uk/ofqual