

18th March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

GCSE Centre Assessed Grades 2021

It has been wonderful to embark on our first full week back with all of our students. As I said last week, I have been incredibly impressed with their maturity and diligence since their return to face-to-face teaching. It is lovely to see our classrooms full once again!

Further to my letter last week, I am now in a position to provide confirmation of our plans for assessing grades this summer for our students in Years 10 and 11. There is a lot of information contained in this letter so I will try to keep it as succinct as possible.

Important dates:

- We will determine and send the grades to the exam boards by the **18th June 2021**.
- GCSE and vocational results will be published for students on the **12th August 2021**.

How we will assess the grades:

- What students have done so far counts. What they do now will only add to this.
- Students should use the feedback from their teachers to make progress and improve.
- Teachers will use the exam board criteria for each course to support students to understand how to improve and make progress.
- We will base our assessment on the standard at which students are currently working, we are unable to forecast a grade, it is an evidence based assessment.
- Students will only be assessed on what content has been delivered (online or face to face).
- We will ensure that students have covered sufficient content to allow for progression (to Post-16 study).
- Our grades will be based on actual work which our teachers have marked, rather than an algorithm.
- We will use a broad range of assessment evidence, in line with guidance from awarding bodies, but we will need to be confident that it is the student's own work.
- In deciding if the evidence is the student's own work, we will take into account whether the work was produced in controlled conditions and whether the standard is in line with other evidence that we have for that student.
- Each department will determine its own portfolio of evidence, which provides the best overview of student attainment for their subject in the circumstances.
- The evidence can come from any point during the course of study, but recent work, and assessments still to be completed, are likely to form most of the evidence.
- Weighting of the evidence will be done in line with the assessment objectives outlined in the exam board specification.
- The evidence which will count towards the final result will be the numerical score from each assessment, rather than any grades communicated during the course of study. Final grades will only be determined at the very end of the process and could be higher or lower than grades included in reports or for particular assessments.
- Students will be made aware of which evidence is being used to assess their grade but will not be informed of the grade until the results day in August, in line with Ofqual's instructions.
- Students will need to continue to complete their non-exam assessment (NEA), portfolios and endorsements.

Future Assessments:

- Students will have a number of opportunities to complete work that could be used as evidence as well as using previous work.
- The bulk of these opportunities will consist of in class assessments and questions provided by exam boards, which we are yet to receive.
- Students will always know if and when the work they are doing could count towards their evidence. They will not be assessed without their knowledge.
- Reasonable adjustments for Exam Access Arrangements will be put into place where appropriate.
- The leaving date for students in Year 11 is yet to be confirmed, but it is likely to be close to May/June half term, once all of the assessments are complete.

How we will ensure the grades are fair:

- We will carry out quality assurance (including moderation) and check grades thoroughly before they are submitted.
- Moderation processes will anonymise student details to prevent bias.
- All grades will be quality assured by the head of department, data team and Headteacher.
- We will consider previous results from Isca to ensure that this year's grades are not unduly harsh or lenient.
- Exam boards will carry out external quality assurance.
- If there are concerns with the grades submitted, the awarding body will work with the school to address this before results are released.

After results day:

- Students will be entitled to appeal against their results.
- Any appeal will be considered initially by the school to determine whether our processes were followed correctly, without administrative or procedural error.
- If a student is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal, the school will appeal to the awarding body on the student's behalf, and the awarding body will consider whether the processes were appropriate. They will also review the agreed folder of evidence and decide whether academic judgement was exercised reasonably by the school in arriving at the grade.
- It is important to note that appeals could lead to grades going down as well as up.
- The Department for Education has indicated that it hopes to offer an autumn series of exams for students who wish to try to improve on their centre-assessed grades. This has yet to be confirmed.
- Year 10 students will have an opportunity to re-sit their English Literature in Year 11, should they wish to.

Next steps:

I appreciate how difficult this situation is for our students and it is certainly not the way we wanted their courses to end. However, I can reassure you that we are taking the responsibility of assessing their grades with the utmost seriousness and we will give them every chance to demonstrate what they can do to gain the excellent results they deserve.

So, what does this really mean for our students? Over this forthcoming week, we will produce a clear framework and timeline to prepare the students in order to gather their evidence portfolio. What I can assure you is that we will guide our students through this with a great deal of care and they will be given every opportunity to demonstrate their ability.

I am sure you will understand that it will not be possible for us to enter into a conversation with you about the grades to be awarded in the summer, and I would please ask you to refrain from contacting individual teachers to ask about grades, as they are not permitted to discuss this.

Ofqual have released a very useful and straightforward infographic which I have included at the bottom of this letter. In addition, there is a useful article from Ofqual's Chief regulator, Simon Lebus which can be found [Here](#).

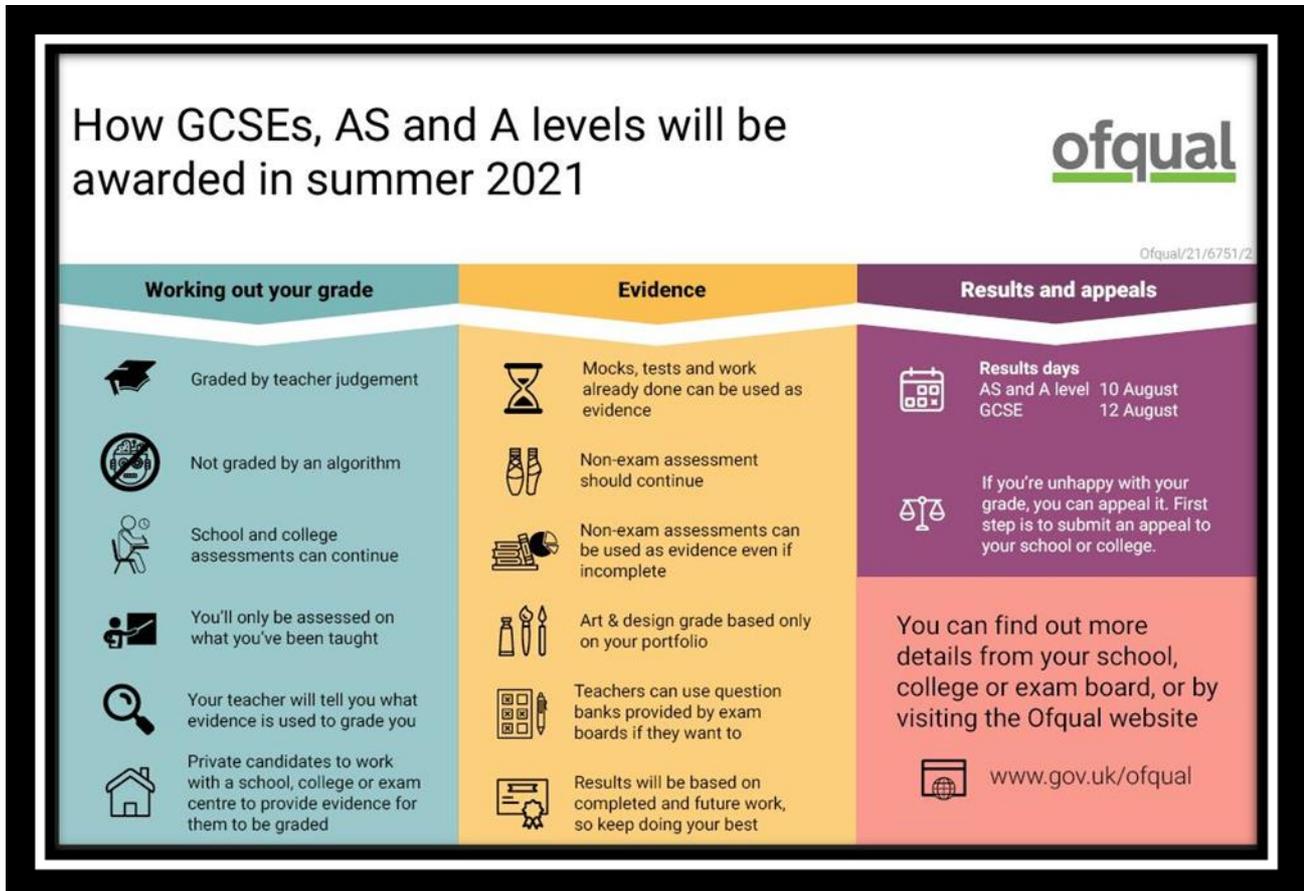
The most important message is for our students to continue to work hard and act on the feedback provided by their teachers because there will be ample opportunities to demonstrate their ability. We have every confidence in them. It is also really important for every student to have a secure plan for their education, employment or training beyond Isca. There is support and guidance available for our students from our Post 16 Transition Coordinator who can be contacted on jtaylor@iscaexeter.co.uk. Their tutor and Head of Year can also advise and support with this.

In the meantime, we will do everything we can to make our students final term the very best possible. Thank you for your ongoing support and please do contact us if you need anything at all.

Best wishes,



Aimee Mitchell Headteacher



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

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Working out your grade	Evidence	Results and appeals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graded by teacher judgement Not graded by an algorithm School and college assessments can continue You'll only be assessed on what you've been taught Your teacher will tell you what evidence is used to grade you Private candidates to work with a school, college or exam centre to provide evidence for them to be graded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mocks, tests and work already done can be used as evidence Non-exam assessment should continue Non-exam assessments can be used as evidence even if incomplete Art & design grade based only on your portfolio Teachers can use question banks provided by exam boards if they want to Results will be based on completed and future work, so keep doing your best 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results days AS and A level 10 August GCSE 12 August If you're unhappy with your grade, you can appeal it. First step is to submit an appeal to your school or college. You can find out more details from your school, college or exam board, or by visiting the Ofqual website www.gov.uk/ofqual