



10<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Year 11 students and parents/carers,

You will no doubt be aware from the news and social media that this year's GCSE exams and exams in other Key Stage 4 qualifications will not take place this summer as planned. Instead, they will be replaced by a system of teacher assessed grades.

We have only limited information from the Department for Education at the moment, however, I wanted to share some information about what I *DO* know at this point. When I know more, I will certainly communicate with you.

- The grades that students will be awarded will be based upon assessments of what students have been taught and not what they have missed
- Teachers will use a range of evidence to underpin their assessments including coursework, class tests, assessments, questions provided by boards, mocks exams, and other forms of evidence
- Exam Boards will be issuing grade descriptors linked to standards in previous years so that students and teachers can be assured of what's required at each grade
- There will be a Quality Assurance process carried out by exam boards
- GCSE Results day will be two weeks earlier on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> August
- There will be a formal and fair appeals system should students feel a grade is wrong.

You may have heard about the use of an algorithm last year that adjusted students' grades. We have been told categorically that this will not be used this year. The government has also pledged that the process to award grades in vocational qualifications will be as fair and applied with as much rigour as with that of GCSES.

The best advice I can give students as they settle back into school, is to adopt a positive mind set and a willingness to pick up from where they left off. Whether you are a student who completed every piece of work during lockdown to an excellent standard, a student whose approach to learning at times was less good, or a student whose engagement was somewhere in the middle, the next 3 months will be key in showing us what you *CAN* do.

Yours sincerely,

Mr A Hunter  
Deputy Headteacher