**18th January 2021**

Dear Parents and Carers

As mentioned in my message last week, the Department for Education (DfE) and Ofqual have now launched their consultation for the summer 2021 exam series for [GCSEs, AS and A-levels](https://elink.clickdimensions.com/c/6/?T=OTM3NTU3Mzc%3AMDItYjIxMDE1LWEwNzE0NTM5NTk2MjQwZWY4ZjMxYzAzYWUwNzAyNTM5%3AdG1jY2FiZUBzdC1qb3NlcGhzLmJvbHRvbi5zY2gudWs%3AY29udGFjdC00YmI1YzJiODExMGZlYjExYTgxMzAwMGQzYTM4YWVmOS04YjYxOWZmNmU0NDQ0Yjc1OWU5NGQwMjhlNTk2NmE3YQ%3AZmFsc2U%3AMA%3A%3AaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ292LnVrL2dvdmVybm1lbnQvY29uc3VsdGF0aW9ucy9jb25zdWx0YXRpb24tb24taG93LWdjc2UtYXMtYW5kLWEtbGV2ZWwtZ3JhZGVzLXNob3VsZC1iZS1hd2FyZGVkLWluLXN1bW1lci0yMDIxP19jbGRlZT1kRzFqWTJGaVpVQnpkQzFxYjNObGNHaHpMbUp2YkhSdmJpNXpZMmd1ZFdzJTNkJnJlY2lwaWVudGlkPWNvbnRhY3QtNGJiNWMyYjgxMTBmZWIxMWE4MTMwMDBkM2EzOGFlZjktOGI2MTlmZjZlNDQ0NGI3NTllOTRkMDI4ZTU5NjZhN2EmZXNpZD02ZThkNzliYS01YTU3LWViMTEtYTgxMi0wMDBkM2FiYjA0NjQ&K=MG9f72eMmfRpKEKAvi564Q). This follows on from the Secretary of State’s announcement last week that exams won’t go ahead as normal this summer – and that the Government will work with Ofqual and exam boards on alternative arrangements. As students reflect on their pre public exam grades they should remember that these are by no means the most important bit of evidence leading to their assessment. Students and parents will be pleased that the proposals are that a much wider evidence base should be considered but I encourage you to have your say so that the system is as fair as it possibly can be. <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-how-gcse-as-and-a-level-grades-should-be-awarded-in-summer-2021>   
  
There is a long document that explains the proposals but here is a summary of what you will be asked to give your view on:

* Whether a student’s grade in each subject will be based on their teachers’ assessment of the standard at which the student is performing, using a combination of evidence that might include:
  + results from papers provided by exam boards, but set by teachers to take account of differential learning. This will be supported by mark schemes, exemplar papers, other guidance on standardisation, and training from exam boards
  + non-exam assessment (NEA) in subjects where it applies
  + other performance evidence such formal tests, mock exam results and any substantial work completed by students.
* Whether all students can appeal if they don’t believe their grade reflects the evidence of the standard at which they were performing

In terms of timing, the DfE and Ofqual are proposing that:

* students are assessed by their teachers in a period beginning in May into early June
* teachers submit grades to exam boards by mid-June
* external quality assurance is carried out by exam boards throughout June
* results are issued to students after the quality assurance, most likely in early July.

The DfE and Ofqual say that students should be given time to complete their non-exam assessments (NEA), as this will contribute to the evidence teachers use to determine their grades. They are proposing that the exam boards should give guidance on adjustments that could be made to the way non-exam assessments are completed, to account for current circumstances.  
  
The DfE and Ofqual have also [launched a consultation](https://elink.clickdimensions.com/c/6/?T=OTM3NTU3Mzc%3AMDItYjIxMDE1LWEwNzE0NTM5NTk2MjQwZWY4ZjMxYzAzYWUwNzAyNTM5%3AdG1jY2FiZUBzdC1qb3NlcGhzLmJvbHRvbi5zY2gudWs%3AY29udGFjdC00YmI1YzJiODExMGZlYjExYTgxMzAwMGQzYTM4YWVmOS04YjYxOWZmNmU0NDQ0Yjc1OWU5NGQwMjhlNTk2NmE3YQ%3AZmFsc2U%3AMQ%3A%3AaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ292LnVrL2dvdmVybm1lbnQvY29uc3VsdGF0aW9ucy9jb25zdWx0YXRpb24tb24tYWx0ZXJuYXRpdmUtYXJyYW5nZW1lbnRzLWZvci10aGUtYXdhcmQtb2YtdnRxcy1hbmQtb3RoZXItZ2VuZXJhbC1xdWFsaWZpY2F0aW9ucy1pbi0yMDIxP19jbGRlZT1kRzFqWTJGaVpVQnpkQzFxYjNObGNHaHpMbUp2YkhSdmJpNXpZMmd1ZFdzJTNkJnJlY2lwaWVudGlkPWNvbnRhY3QtNGJiNWMyYjgxMTBmZWIxMWE4MTMwMDBkM2EzOGFlZjktOGI2MTlmZjZlNDQ0NGI3NTllOTRkMDI4ZTU5NjZhN2EmZXNpZD02ZThkNzliYS01YTU3LWViMTEtYTgxMi0wMDBkM2FiYjA0NjQ&K=3dnJ0OvFWJJBXigsChFbCw) to look at which Vocational, Technical, and other Qualifications will need alternative arrangements and how those arrangements should work.

If you are concerned about your child’s mock grades and would like to discuss the implications or what you need to do to improve on the grade please see Mrs Morgan’s letter last week outlining how to book an appointment on the School Cloud system. The general message for students is though, that we have until May/June to come up with evidence to show what level each student is a capable of achieving – so there is everything to play for!

Take care!

*Tony McCabe*

*Headteacher*