

Year 11 assessment – a message from Mr Greenwood

As you will know, at the end of February, the Education Secretary made an announcement about this summer's examinations and assessments. Whilst some further details from the exam boards are yet to be confirmed, I am writing to give you some more information about this process following an assembly to Year 11 this week which was based on questions students had submitted on this topic.

On 12 August, students will find out their grades, and be given the same GCSE and BTEC certificates as in a normal year. The difference this year is that grades will be set by schools without exams. Grades are not given by teachers as such: they will be based on the quality of students' work, and particularly their formal assessments, measured against nationally-defined standards. These grades will then be checked by other teachers, subject leaders and the leadership team in a process of moderation, standardisation and quality assurance, and then checked again by the exam boards.

The work done from now on, and particularly the assessments students will sit in class, will be used to award students a final GCSE or BTEC grade. Students will receive plenty of notice ahead of their assessments in lessons and using Satchel. Lessons will continue to focus on the GCSE curriculum and preparing students for assessments. Booster and revision sessions will resume at lunch and after school from 15 March.

Your child must work as hard as they can to ensure they do well in all assessments over the coming weeks and months – this will ensure that they achieve the highest possible grade. This means working hard in lessons, completing all homework and revising at home for three hours per day.

We are keen to ensure that students are awarded fair grades and we have already put in place a series of plans, equal to or exceeding the guidance from the exam boards, to ensure that we do so. All grades entered will go through a series of 'quality assurance' steps by the school. This means that all marking and the grades arrived at will be checked for accuracy. This is an important requirement for us as a school.

In BTECs and practical subjects such as Art, students' grades may be based more on their NEA than it would otherwise have been.

I know students are keen to know when their academic year will end; we will give them this information as soon as we can, but at present it depends very much on the guidance from the exam boards.

I am confident that if your child works hard they will do well over the coming months, and this will ensure they achieve a set of grades with which they will be pleased. We will continue to do everything we can to support them, but ultimately their success will be the result of their own labours.