



Queen Mary's Grammar School

Headmaster: R J Langton, M A

April 2021

Dear Y11 and Y13 parents and students,

We hope that this letter finds you well at this busy time of GCSE and A Level assessments for all. Departments are continuing the process of assessing students during lessons in low-stakes conditions throughout this half term. This will enable staff to gather the evidence required for decisions on the GCSE and A Level Teacher-Assessed Grades decisions that must be submitted to the exam boards by Friday 18 June. More information on the time, date and topics to be assessed has been released by departments. We know that this is a challenging time for students, parents and staff and we would encourage you to contact the school if you have any concerns or issues.

The purpose of this email is to set out for you the key information on how Teacher-Assessed Grades will be decided by the school. You will find the School's Centre Policy, which has been submitted to the awarding bodies here: <https://qmg.walsall.sch.uk/policies/> and a JCQ Guidance document for Students and Parents in the policies section here: <https://qmg.walsall.sch.uk/letters-for-parents/>. These are top-level documents that relate to the school's overall policy, following national OFQUAL and JCQ guidelines. Each department has autonomy over what and when assessments are to be conducted over this half term, working within the parameters of these documents.

An important part of the process that we are putting in place is to ensure that we are aware of any unavoidable personal circumstances that may have affected performance in any assessment that may be taken into account in the formation of the grades. We will capture this information at the point of any assessments taking place in April and May 2021 via an assessment cover sheet in class but there may be other historical factors that we need to know about from before this time. The JCQ document attached highlights the importance of the school having all relevant information before grades are awarded. We would ask all students to complete an MS Form to inform us of any personal circumstances that may be relevant. JCQ is clear, these must be circumstances that are **above and beyond the general challenges that have been faced by all students through the time of the covid pandemic**. General loss of learning, or learning remotely, for example, will not be taken as individual mitigating circumstances. In all cases, the impact of the circumstances must have been **outside of the candidate's control at the time of the assessment**. The School will decide whether to accept the personal circumstances submitted, will record the decision and inform the student of that decision. If the circumstances are accepted, it may result in a specific piece of evidence being withdrawn or replaced, if at all possible. There are no "Special Considerations" this year as that only ever applies to external public exams.

The link below will take you to the MS Form for the recording of historical personal circumstances that fit within the descriptors above and in the attached document. This can only be completed by the student, using their school email address. This is so that we can verify the information being submitted as authentic. **This form must be completed by Friday 7 May 2021.**

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=E1T1PdfOSEuPbjC8TawIT16VNItSuf1NrC5wlUqKWrtUOEczVEVWMVZUVlpNSDA3V0M5TkIzVFpBNi4u>

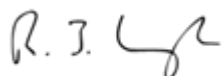
We will be releasing more information about arrangements for results days in August. If national conditions permit, we intend to physically welcome all Year 11 and Year 13 students into school to receive their grades in person on these dates:

Year 13 - Tuesday August 10 2021
Year 11 - Thursday August 12 2021

The JCQ and OFQUAL guidance is very clear - we cannot discuss a grade with any students or parents until those results days. There is also to be no negotiation over what assessments are included as evidence for the awarding of grades to the whole cohort. All students will be informed of what assessment evidence is to be used by departments to award a grade before the grades are submitted. We will be working as hard as we can over the next few weeks to ensure that students are awarded the right grade, supported by the evidence that we have gathered together in each subject. Exam boards will be conducting Quality Assurance activities on all schools and there is information widely available about an appeals process after results are published, for anyone that thinks the evidence submitted to the board should have resulted in a different grade awarded. As JCQ point out in their document: **"It's important to remember that your grade can go down, up or stay the same through either stage of the [appeals] process"**

There is a lot of information to take on board and we understand that these are anxious times for all. However, it is an important part of the whole process that we keep you informed as much as possible. If you require any further information, please contact the school.

Yours sincerely,



Richard Langton
Headmaster