

Update on Final Grade for Year 11 Students 2021

Dear Parents / Carers / Year 11 Students,

As you are aware, in January the government decided that the 2021 summer exam series could not go ahead due to school closures and actions to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Following consultation, where over 47,000 students made responses along with professionals in the education field, it has been decided that this year's cohort should instead receive grades based on teachers' judgements of their performance, based on a range of evidence.

We have been asked to make sure that students keep studying and providing evidence for as long as possible, until we submit your grades in mid-June – it is so important that you continue to engage with lessons, portfolio work and the PPEs that we will continue to conduct (some provided by the exam boards). We have to make sure that we have evidence of the grade you are working at, and to ensure that you are prepared for your next stage in education. We want all students to start college courses, apprenticeships and training having received the appropriate qualifications.

The government has provided the following legal direction:

Assessment and evidence

- To determine the grade each student should receive, teachers must assess their students' performance, only on the content that has been delivered to them over their KS4 course. Course content may have been adapted, as instructed by exam boards. Your teachers will be going over this in lessons and using the time up until June to help you deepen your knowledge of the course and provide good evidence of the grade you are working at.
- Teachers can use evidence of a student's performance from throughout the course to inform their judgement. Schools and colleges should use a broad range of evidence across the taught content to determine the grades before submitting them to the exam boards. All the work you have done so far will help to decide your grade and there is still time to improve on where you are working at currently.
- Teachers should determine the grades as late in the academic year as is practicable, and not confined to a defined window, to enable teaching to continue for as long as possible. We will submit grades for 18th June 2021 in line with the exam board deadline.
- Students should continue to work on their non-exam assessment (NEA), for vocational and portfolio-based subjects. NEA will be marked by teachers and will contribute to the overall grade, whether or not it has been completed, but it will not be moderated by the exam board. In GCSE art and design, the student's grade must be based on the portfolio only, whether or not it has been completed. It is important that you continue to work on coursework to produce the best final pieces that you can for your teacher to assess.

STBA is proud to be part of the



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Support materials

- Exam boards will provide a package of support materials to include questions, mark schemes, and data about how students typically performed in individual questions. In addition, they will provide advice for teachers about content coverage, topic selection, marking and making grading judgements. This will be based on past questions and will include a proportion of previously unpublished questions for every subject. We will build a number of these assessments into PPEs over the Spring and into the Summer and will use them to form part of the range of evidence teachers could use to determine the grade.

Quality assurance

- Exam boards will work together as far as possible to ensure that requirements for internal quality assurance (QA) and arrangements for external QA are consistent. United Endeavour Trust will set up internal QA arrangements based on exam board guidance, which will help us to check that the judgements made by teachers are well evidenced and are not unduly harsh or lenient.
- Exam boards will conduct external QA to check a school's internal QA processes and may request a review of the evidence for one or more subjects. Exam boards will process the grades submitted by schools only after completing, and being satisfied with, any external QA.

Appealing your Results

- Students will be able to appeal their grade. A student who is unhappy with their grade will first ask their school to check whether an administrative or procedural error had been made. Where a school does identify an error in the grade submitted to the exam board, it can submit a revised grade and a rationale for the board to consider. If the exam board is satisfied with the rationale, it will issue a revised grade.
- Where a school does not believe an error had been made, a student can ask the school to appeal to the exam board on their behalf. The school will submit the student's appeal to the exam board and provide the evidence on which the judgement had been made; the exam board will consider whether, in its view, the grade reflected an appropriate exercise of academic judgement. If the exam board judges that the school did not, the exam board will decide on the grade that the evidence would support. The exam board will also check that the school had followed its own process.

Results

Results days will be on 12 August for GCSE results. Our most important advice to you at the moment is to continue to work hard, focus on improving your work and work with your teachers to achieve the best grade you can.

The commitment and dedication that was demonstrated during the week of E-PPEs has revealed that you are a year group intent on doing yourselves proud and working as hard as possible to produce the best outcomes possible – and we have every confidence that this will continue.

We look forward to having you back in school to support you with this.

Yours faithfully,



Mr J Henshaw

Executive Principal

Mrs J Hingley

Associate Principal