

Parental Guide to the Years 11 and 13 Results Process 2021

What have Ofqual actually said?

Ofqual, the exams regulator, announced last week that following a consultation period, final grades would be decided by school assessment. The guidance is clear that students' grades should be based on a broad range of evidence gathered during courses so far and over the coming weeks.

We are expected to upload the final grades to exam boards by 18th June and have put into place a process to enable this to take place. As well as assessing students and collecting grades, it is important to note that we also have to undertake quality assurance work during this time period to check the accuracy of grades. For this reason, it is likely that assessments will only run until the week beginning 17th May. Exam boards will also conduct checks to ensure that our processes and grades are as fair and accurate as possible.

The Ofqual guidance also outlined that the examination boards have been asked to provide schools with additional support materials to help with the process of arriving at final grades. There is no expectation that schools will use these and they cannot be used as the only evidence on which to base final grades. We are awaiting this and further guidance to be released by the examination boards.

The guidance also outlines that schools are able to use assessment completed prior to the January lockdown as evidence. Non-examined assessment will be taken into account in the final grade calculation. If any units or work are incomplete, students will not be disadvantaged as a result of this and will still be graded if there is enough evidence to form a basis of a decision.

Results days will be as follows:

- **Tuesday 10th August** will be Year 13 results day
- **Thursday 12th August** will be Year 11 results day

The Ofqual guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/how-qualifications-will-be-awarded-in-2021>

What's the plan for implementing Ofqual's guidance?

By the end of week beginning 15th March we will publish a medium term curriculum plan on our website for each subject. This will outline what topics will be covered during the remaining weeks, how they will be assessed and provide a rough time frame. This will run alongside an assessment outline for each subject.

The assessment outline document will detail assessments which have taken place prior to January and are going to be factored into the final grade process. It will also outline plans for assessments to be completed over the coming weeks. In each case there will be an indication of the weighting of each assessment to give an idea of how much of the overall qualification it counts towards.

In vocational subjects, such as BTECs and Cambridge Nationals, students will continue to work on internal assessment tasks as appropriate. This will be detailed in the curriculum and assessment planning documents.

The Ofqual guidance outlines that courses should continue to be taught over the remaining weeks of Year 11 and 13. We are allowing each subject area to plan what is best for their students. Lessons will support students in preparing for the assessments that have been planned and students will be made aware of the topic that they will be based on. They will not be told what the question is. These assessments will mainly take place under examination conditions and will be marked using uniform mark schemes within departments. Quality Assurance measures will be in place to ensure consistency.

These assessment tasks will be a mixture of things: they could be an exam question on a set topic; a sample from an Exam Board task; a traditional test; a specific homework task; a practical activity etc. depending upon the subject and type of assessment most likely to provide an informative outcome.

If any students are going to be absent for an assessment due to having to self-isolate, we will try to, as far as possible, send a copy of the assessment to be completed at home. Someone at home will need to sign to confirm that the correct conditions have been adhered to in this situation. If students missed assessments earlier in the year due to self-isolation, they will not be disadvantaged because of this.

As well as the assessments outlined on the documents shared via our website, the school's judgements will also be based on a range of homework, classwork and other relevant tasks completed during the course.

Students who are entitled to extra time or other access arrangements will have this available to them, should they wish to use it.

In summary, final grades will be based on the following:

- The summer topic assessments completed over the coming weeks
- Relevant previous assessments completed throughout the duration of the course
- Other relevant classwork (including work completed remotely) or homework
- Non-Examination Assessment completed as part of appropriate courses

Can you tell me what grade my child is going to get?

The guidance is very clear: we are not able to discuss final grades. Please do not ask teachers for this information as this could be considered exam malpractice.

We are able to discuss grades awarded for assessments completed earlier in the course. We will also be giving scores and, where appropriate, grades for assessments completed over the coming weeks.

It is really important to familiarise yourself with the 'weightings' section of the assessment documents on the website when they are available. 'Student A' might sit a geography assessment in May and achieve a grade 8. However, it may also be the case that this assessment covers approximately 10% of the geography course and all other assessed work was graded at a 6 or 7. In this case it would be likely that the final grade would be around a 7. All relevant evidence will be considered, however, it's important to note that some assessments are worth more than others.

Equally if a student does really poorly on one of the summer assessments, this does not mean that their overall grade will significantly fall. We are aiming to gather as much information as possible to provide students with every opportunity to do their best.

It's also important to ensure that you have engaged with the most recent data report. This was sent out in November for Year 13 and January for Year 11. If your child had a WAG of 6 in a subject and a predicted grade of 6, it is likely that their final grade won't be too far away from that.

None of this is presuming what the final grade may or may not be and the summer assessments will certainly provide opportunities for improvement, however, evidence already available is expected to be taken into account in the final decision.

What if we want to appeal the grade awarded?

The outcome of the consultation indicates there will be an appeals process for students following the issuing of grades in August. The appeals process has two parts:

- Part 1: The first stage requires the school to check that the grade awarded was uploaded correctly to the examination board website. If no error was made, the appeal then moves to the second stage.
- Part 2: This stage sees the appeal escalated to the examination board. If this happens they will investigate whether the school has followed its own internal quality assurance process and whether the evidence submitted by the school is deserving of the grade awarded. It is important to note that anyone escalating their appeal to stage 2 of the process could see their grade could go up or down.

In order to support the potential appeals process, all assessments completed in school between now and 18th June will be stored in school as, in the event of an appeal, the exam board will require access to evidence.

In Summary

We are doing everything we can to ensure that the process we run is fair, rigorous and robust. Ultimately, we want to give each of our students the opportunity to shine. We want the very best for each and every one of them and, whilst we appreciate that there is still some uncertainty around how things will progress, we are committed to running a clear and transparent process so that everyone knows where they stand.

We will update you as and when more information becomes available to us, however, in the meantime, thank you for your continued support and if you have any further questions, please email us on Exams2021@chaseterraceacademy.co.uk