



6 January 2021  
JHR/SKA

Dear Parent/Guardian

I would like to update you on Year 13 grades for A level examinations following today's announcement in parliament and to ask for your further patience until the details are released.

The Secretary of State for Education announced that his intent is for A level grades to be based on teacher assessments (<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/education-secretary-statement-to-parliament-on-national-lockdown>).

Gavin Williamson said "Another area where we have learned lessons is on exams. Last year, all four nations of the UK found their arrangements for awarding grades did not deliver what they needed, with the impact felt painfully by students and their parents. Although exams are the fairest way we have of assessing what a student knows, the impact of this pandemic now means that it is not possible to have these exams this year. I can confirm that GCSEs and A and AS Level exams will not go ahead this summer. This year we are going to put our trust in teachers rather than algorithms. The department and Ofqual had already worked up a range of contingency options. While the details will need to be fine-tuned in consultation with Ofqual, the exam boards and teaching representatives, I can confirm now that I wish to use a form of teacher-assessed grades, with training and support provided to ensure these are awarded fairly and consistently."

I am sure following this statement, you and your child will have many questions, which I hope will be answered by the guidance the government ultimately releases. Please though, do not email or ask to speak to individual teachers regarding their views on teacher assessed grades, and specifically what grade they will award your child. We are not able to answer these questions and I have asked staff not to respond to queries they receive about centre assessed grades. We don't know the details ourselves, but from the process we followed last year it is unlikely that we will be allowed to share any specifics about your child's grade until after they have been awarded in the summer. You will also understand just how stretched teachers are, already teaching on-site whilst also supporting remote learning.

I know this process will add to your inevitable frustration, but please be assured we will do all we can in the circumstances to keep you informed and to ensure the grades that are ultimately awarded are fair.

Yours faithfully

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