

A Level Centre Assessed Grades

It is our goal that all students leave us equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in the world of further education and/or work. Although 2021 summer examinations are cancelled, we are committed to ensure all our students leave fully prepared for their next step in education and training. To award A Level Centre Assessed Grades, we need to complete ongoing topic assessments in order to provide enough opportunities and evidence for students to be justified a worthy A Level grade.

A Level courses should be taught over approximately 2 years. The Covid-19 pandemic has meant that a significant chunk of the course has been covered remotely. Although we have worked hard to ensure that students received the best possible remote education, we recognise that home learning is far from ideal and to assess students on what they have been learning at home would be unfair. Subject departments have identified areas of each A Level course that are essential for a students' next stage as well as identifying those topics that have been taught remotely. They have created a detailed plan for what will be taught, retaught and assessed over the next three months. These plans are focused on ensuring that students are fully prepared for their next steps as well as ensuring that they have a number of opportunities for assessment to show what they are capable of and achieve their best.

To ensure a fair process and remove any possible bias, the following will be in place:

- From now, subjects will only be assessing using exam board past paper questions and the new assessments issued by the exam boards in March. Use of exam board materials means that all assessments are marked according to a quality assured mark scheme.
- Students will use their candidate number rather than their name to eliminate any teacher bias.
- For internal quality assurance, moderation will be completed in subject teams in school.
- For external quality assurance, moderation will be completed across the across the Multi Academy Trust and with external markers where necessary.
- All awarded grades will be 'centre' assessed meaning that no one teacher will be responsible for a student's grade

All students will receive their final grades on August 10th and we are unable to discuss with students their final grade before this date. However, students will be told their raw scores (or percentage achieved) on each assessment once they have been completed in class. Please be aware that these scores do not equate to a final grade. Any questions about final grades will not be able to be answered by teachers as not only would this be considered malpractice as mentioned earlier no individual teacher is responsible for awarding final grades, all grades will be moderated and awarded by the school.

This half term, your son/daughter will receive an overview of the following:

- A detailed list of the subtopics within each assessed unit;
- A timeline of when the topics will be revised and assessed; and
- An updated revision timetable which aligns with the revision and assessments.

Please note that dates of assessments may change.

This booklet contains vital information about each subject for your reference. A video explaining further details on awarding Centre Assessed Grades can be found on our website [here](#).

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Homework equals revision

The next few months are vitally important for your son/daughter and we are keen to support you and them as best we can as they prepare for their internal assessments.

Attendance

Attendance over the next few months is crucial to ensure that your son/daughter not only has as much teaching contact with their teachers as possible, but also to ensure they are privy to essential revision practice. There is a strong link correlation between attendance and success in exams. The table below shows the attendance of two Year 13 students last year and their final grades.

	Overall attendance	Subject	Subject attendance	Final grades
Student 1	72.5%	Business	76%	C
		Maths	64%	U
		Physics	71%	U
Student 2	98.4%	Biology	94%	B
		Chemistry	96%	A
		Maths	97%	A*

It is clear that low attendance has a significant impact on final grades as missed lessons creates knowledge gaps. These gaps in knowledge become quickly apparent to students and puts students under even more pressure to catch up. By now, all courses will be completed and your son/daughter will follow a programme of revision during their lessons. The lessons will contain essential exam practice in preparation for the internal assessments.

Effective revision strategies

Throughout their time in the sixth form, students have been taught what constitutes effective and ineffective revision strategies. Often the easiest strategies prove to be the most ineffective. The following have all been proven by research to have little or no impact on learning:

- Rereading
- Copying notes
- Summarising
- Highlighting key words

The two most effective revision strategies are testing and spacing coupled with good motivation and organisation. Research shows that students who test themselves regularly remember significantly more information and are less likely to suffer from the negative effects of stress associated with exams. Students have been told that although testing and spacing out their testing may feel uncomfortable and more difficult than other strategies, they are the most effective. Further information on these strategies can be found at <https://blog.innerdrive.co.uk/intended-vs-actual-revision-behaviour>

Organisation

As a school we are fully aware of the link between disorganisation and anxiety and during the run up to the mocks and final exams, students need to be calm and in control. At the start of term, we gave students the time to plan out their directed study and create a plan of what their days would look like to ensure that they have time to complete the work set. Having a plan reduces the anxiety of not knowing and ensures that students are in control of their own day. During directed study we are encouraging students to plan out their time to ensure that they are as effective as possible. All teachers when setting homework provide time limits for the different tasks. This is to ensure that students do not spend a disproportionate amount of time on one task and then become anxious and rush to complete the other tasks. Please speak with your son/daughter about these timings and support them to keep within the time limits set.

Holiday work expectations

The courses that your son/daughter are following, whether it be an A level or BTEC, are extensive and as such require students to be working at a high level over the full 18 months of the course. Cramming for an A level or a BTEC assessment is not possible due to the amount of knowledge required. The homework

tasks that your son/daughter are set incorporate both Year 12 and Year 13 content. This enables students to revise throughout the course and again reduces the anxiety and stress linked to assessments.

Common mistakes

Finally, the link below highlights the most common mistakes that students make during their studies and when revising for exams. We have discussed these with your son/daughter on numerous occasions and we would urge you to do the same to ensure they don't fall into the same traps.

<https://blog.innerdrive.co.uk/10-common-student-mistakes>

Key Stage 5 subject list and topics assessed

Subject	Topics being assessed (in order)	Evidence that will be used to award a Centre Assessed Grade
Biology	6 Exchange, 3 Cells 4 Transport 7 Mass Transport 5 Immune system 1 Biological molecules 2 Nucleic acids 8 DNA 9 Genetic diversity 14 Response to stimuli 15 Homeostasis 17 Inheritance 20 Gene expression 11 Photosynthesis 12 Respiration 15 Nerves	Classroom based mini-tests (Past papers)
Business	Topic 1 – What is business? Topic 2 – Managers, leadership and decision making Topic 3 – Decision making to improve marketing performance Topic 4 – Decision making to improve operational performance Topic 5 – Decision making to improve financial performance Topic 6 – Decision making to improve human resource performance Topic 7 – Analysing the strategic position of a business Topic 8 – Choosing the strategic direction Topic 9 – Strategic methods: how to pursue strategies Topic 10 – Managing strategic change	Mock Papers Classroom based mini-tests (Past papers)
Chemistry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1 Atomic structure and 2 amount of substance ● 1 Introduction to organic Chemistry and 25 nomenclature ● 3 Bonding ● 12 Alkanes and 13 Halogenoalkanes ● 4 Energetics and 17 Thermodynamics ● 15 Alcohols and 26 Carbonyl group ● 5 and 15 Kinetics ● 27 Aromatic Chemistry and 28 amines ● 6 Equilibria and 19 Equilibrium constant ● 31 Organic analysis and 33 Chromatography ● 8 and 22 Periodicity ● 7 Redox 	Classroom based assessment using exam board past papers.

Criminology	Year 12 Unit 1: Changing Awareness of Crime Unit 2: Criminological Theories	Controlled Assessment Classroom based mini-tests Mock paper
	Year 13 Unit 3: Crime Scene to Court Room Unit 4: Crime and Punishment	Controlled Assessment Classroom based mini-tests Mock paper (synoptic over all four units of the diploma)
English Language and Literature	Component 1: Telling Stories Component 2: Exploring Conflict Component 3: Making Connections (NEA)	Mock Papers Classroom based mini- tests (Past papers) Finished NEA drafts
Health and Social Care	Unit 1 - Human Lifespan Development External Unit 5 - Meeting Individual Care and Support Needs - Coursework Unit 2 - Working in Health and Social Care -External Unit 12 - Support Individuals with additional needs - Coursework	Previous exam papers - Unit 2 written coursework - unit 5 and unit 12
Maths	Pure Maths Algebra and functions Coordinate geometry in the (x, y) plane Differentiation Integration Exponentials and logarithms Algebraic and partial fractions Functions and modelling Series and sequences The binomial theorem Trigonometry Numerical methods Vectors Statistics Statistical sampling Data presentation and interpretation Probability Statistical distributions Statistical hypothesis testing Regression and correlation Probability The Normal Distribution Mechanics Quantities and units in mechanics Kinematics Forces & Newton's laws Forces at any angle Applications of kinematics Applications of forces	Past Exam Questions Exam Board Assessments
Media	Component 1: Media Products, Industries and Audiences Component 2: Media Forms and Products in Depth Component 3: Cross-media production	Mock papers 1 and 2 Classroom based 30 mark questions for Component 2 Completed cross-media production(2 linked products)

Music Performance	Unit 1 - Practical Music Theory and Harmony Unit 2 - Music Industry Unit 3 - Ensemble Music Performance Unit 6 - Solo Performance	Unit 1 - 2 assignments (Internally Marked) Unit 2 - Externally assessed (pearson) Unit 3 - Externally assessed (pearson) Unit 6 - 2 assignments (Internally Marked) Marks awarded by Pearson
Music Technology	Unit 3 - Music and Sound For Media Unit 6 - DAW Production Unit 10 - Remixing and Reworking Unit 13 - Mixing and Mastering Techniques Unit 16 - Commercial Music Production	Unit 3 - 2 assignments (Internally Marked) Unit 6 - Externally assessed (pearson) Unit 10 - 3 assignments (Internally Marked) Unit 13 - 2 assignments (Internally Marked) Unit 16 - 2 assignments (Internally Marked) Marks awarded by Pearson
Performing Arts	Unit 3- Influential performance practice Unit 4- Combined Arts Unit 8- Performing Repertoire Unit 1- Preparing to work in the Performing Arts industry Unit 2- Proposal for a commissioning brief.	Unit 3- awards given by OCR Unit 4- Internal assessments and practical evidence. Witness statements. Unit 8- Internal assessments, essays and individual performances. Unit 1- Internal assessments, essays and reports. Recording of monologues. Unit 2- Internal essays and assessments.
Philosophy and Ethics	Ancient Greek influences: Plato, Aristotle Soul, mind and body Arguments from observation Arguments from reason Religious language Ethical theories (natural law, utilitarianism, Kantian ethics, situation ethics) Business Ethics Sexual ethics Meta-ethics Conscience Christian moral principles and actions Religious Pluralism and theology and society Gender and society and theology The challenge of secularism Liberation theology and Marxism	End of topic essays Past exam questions Exam board questions Mock exams
Product Design	Unit 1 - Performance papers Unit 2 Performance of polymers Unit 3 Performance of woods Unit 4 Performance of metals Unit 5 Performance of composite materials Unit 6 Processing paper and boards Unit 7 Processing polymers Unit 8 Processing wood	End of unit Assessments (Every half term) Mock papers External exam grade (March 2021) Portfolio of Evidence NEA Task (50%)

	Unit 9 Processing metals Unit 10 Industrial design Unit 11 Product design considerations Unit 12 Product design Unit 13 Design methods	
Psychology	1. Research methods 2. biopsychology 3. approaches 4. memory 5. Issues and debates 6. social influence 7. Forensic 8. schizophrenia	mock papers (1, 2 and 3) individual topic assessments/essays: 1. Social influence 2. memory 3. research methods 4. biopsychology 5. approaches 6. issues and debates 7. forensic 8. schizophrenia
Sociology	Beliefs in Society Families and Households Theory and Methods Education with methods in context Crime and Deviance	End of topic essays Past exam questions Exam board questions Mock exams
Sport	2 Units Graded June 2020: Unit 2 - Lifestyle Factors Unit 3 -Application of Fitness Testing Unit 1 - Anatomy and Physiology Unit 5 - Professional Development	Marks awarded by Pearson Marks awarded by Pearson External exam grade (March 2021) Portfolio of Evidence
Travel and Tourism	2 Units Graded June 2020: Unit 1 - World of T&T Unit 3 - Marketing in T&T Unit 2 - Global Destinations Unit 9 - Visitor Attractions	Marks awarded by Pearson Marks awarded by Pearson External exam grade (March 2021) Portfolio of Evidence

Appendix 1: NEA A- Level Courses

Subject	Information about the NEA (Non-Examined Assessment)
Biology, Chemistry and Physics	The practical endorsement will only be based upon the practicals completed
Business	All components of the NEA will be considered
English Language and Literature	All components of the NEA will be considered
Product Design	Only selected components of the NEA will be taken into consideration (analysis, research, specification, design brief, design ideas, 3D rendering, exploded view and orthographic projection) These components will not be considered when assigning Centre Assessed Grades: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Realisation of design ideas▪ Test and evaluation

Appendix 2: Frequently Asked Questions about CAGs

How will grades be awarded this summer?

Grades for GCSEs, A levels, and most other qualifications including applied generals will be based on a process involving teacher assessments against national standards, internal quality assurance, and external quality assurance by the exam boards.

The national process defined by the Department for Education and the exams' regulator, Ofqual is as follows:

1. Teachers will assess students against a national standard, which will be defined by the exam boards before the Easter break.
2. Departments will submit grades which will be quality assured by the school. This internal quality assurance process will have to be signed off by the exam board to ensure it is rigorous and in line with national standards.
3. Our school results will be quality assured externally by the exam boards, which may include random sampling of our school's evidence.
4. If the exam boards are confident in our submitted results, then the exam boards will award students their final grades.
5. If students do not think their results are accurate, they will have the right to appeal.

So, do teachers award the grade?

Simply: no. The grade students achieve will start with their teacher's assessments of their performance across a range of evidence. This is against a nationally-defined standard, not the teacher's own opinion. This assessment is then subject to both internal and external quality assurance before the final grade is awarded by the exam body as usual.

Does this mean grades are decided by an algorithm?

No, unlike last year, students' grades will not be changed by a formula. The internal and external quality assurance measures will all be done by trained professionals, not an algorithm.

What about loss of learning / impact of Covid?

This year, teachers will only assess students on content they have been taught – because of the continued disruption of the pandemic. This means students will not be disadvantaged if they have been unable to complete their full course. However, grades can only be submitted on the basis of the evidence we have of students' performance, even if that evidence covers less of the course than usual. Students who would usually have concessions in the exams will benefit from the same arrangements in their teacher assessments.

Will grades be different between different schools and colleges?

No, the standard against which teachers will be assessing students is set nationally by the exam boards. This is the standard that will be used during external quality assurance and appeals to ensure consistency and fairness across the system.

What evidence will be used?

Teachers are able to draw on a range of assessment evidence from across a student's study of the course from years 9 to 11. This may include mock exams, assessments and papers set by the exam boards. The exam boards are producing assessment materials that will be sent to us before Easter. Different departments may use different sources of evidence, and there is no requirement for any one type of assessment to be used – it's about a performance across a range of evidence.

The exam boards are only giving out past papers, how is this fair?

Most of the assessments provided by the exam boards will be drawn from past papers, although there will be new questions as well. There is significant research that even if students have seen assessments questions before, it does not reduce the validity of the assessment. Furthermore, exam board questions are only one of the many pieces of evidence we will use to assess students this summer.

Can students and parents make the case for why a student should get a higher grade?

Our teachers are already using their professional expertise to assess students on the content they have been taught. Teachers are unable to submit higher grades for students unless they have the evidence that they are consistently working at this level. If teachers submit higher grades without evidence they are committing exam malpractice.

In 2020, any undue pressure by student or parent who placed undue pressure on teachers to increase grades was also considered exam malpractice. It is likely to be the same for 2021. If students or parents are found to be putting teachers or leaders under undue pressure to increase grades, then this matter will be referred to the exam boards and an investigation into malpractice may ensue. This may result in the student's certificate being removed entirely if malpractice is deemed to have taken place.

Can students discuss their grades with teachers?

Teachers will be able to discuss which evidence they are using to inform their judgement with students, including marked or graded pieces of work. However, we are not allowed to disclose their final submitted grade we give to the exam board. Students should not attempt to second-guess the grade submitted, as teachers will be using a range of evidence to inform their final judgement. Students must not pressure teachers to reveal the grades they are submitting, or to increase the grades, as doing so may be considered exam malpractice.

What should students do to improve their grades?

The best thing students can do is to continue to attend classes, learn, act on feedback from their teachers, revise and complete all homework set. Their grade will be based on their performance, and so their outcomes are ultimately in their hands.