



Exam Grades – likely questions

This document is an attempt to address the questions we think you might wish to ask.

Thank you for respecting our request that you should not contact teachers about grades. This remains our position and the Headteacher has directed staff not to respond to any emails pertaining to this. If you have emailed, you should not expect to receive a reply. Even if your specific question is not answered herein, we hope you will be able to interpret and infer an answer based on the other information provided.

Parents can be confident that the school will treat all students fairly and appropriately. It is worth stressing that the grades RPS submit will only be a small part of the story. Exam boards will statistically standardise grades from all schools to ensure fairness and consistency.

What are you going to consider?

Obviously, we will follow the Ofqual guidance. Here is the [Guide for Teachers, Students & Parents](#). The Ofqual Blog also has a short video [Exams in 2020 Information for students](#)

In summary, we are aiming to consider all that is relevant. The grades we submit will reflect a fair, reasonable and carefully considered judgement of the most likely grade a student would have achieved if they had sat their exams this summer and completed any non-examined assessment.

How important are the mock exams?

The media has made much of the importance of mock exam grades. This will lead to worry from some – “I underperformed”, “I was ill”, “I missed an exam” – but please trust us. We will not base our submissions on a single assessment point. To do so would be lazy and unfair! Teachers will know which students underachieved on mocks and have been assessing work and contributions over the whole course.

My child has had access arrangements agreed since the mocks – how might this be considered?

We will ensure that all teachers are reminded and updated of any access arrangements so that this is considered. We will look at historic cases where access arrangements have been granted late to see what difference this made.

Will you factor in maturity or improved work ethic?

Yes. But nearly all students mature and begin to work harder as the stakes are raised in the run into exams or following a ‘wake-up-call’ at the mocks. Where the effort has been obvious, visible and sustained in the eyes of the teacher, this will be noted. We cannot accept petitions from parents or tutors.

Will you accept work from my child’s tutor or their tutors’ view on likely grades?

No. Not all children have tutors and many families cannot afford this additional provision. Any work submitted would be unfairly advantageous – even if we had the capacity to review it (which is highly unlikely). Similarly, we will not hear the opinions of tutors as these are likely to be highly preferential.

Should my child still be working? Are there any extra tasks they could be doing to “prove themselves”?

We have consistently encouraged students in Years 11 and 13 to continue to engage with their teachers and the tasks being set especially in the case of subjects that still had content that required completion. This is as much to encourage a sense of purpose and normality as anything else. Maintaining a routine is good for us all.

The publication of the government’s guidance has forced us to reflect on our position regarding the admissibility of tasks completed during the lockdown. The guidance is clear that “no student should be disadvantaged if they are unable to complete any work set after schools were closed”. The logical corollary being that we cannot advantage students by giving them additional tasks, nor can we consider any work completed after 20th March.

What now?

At the start of the week beginning 4th May, departments will start sharing post 16 preparation work with Year 11 students. These dates loosely correlate with when study leave would have started. As yet, we don’t know whether school will be open for the planned sixth form induction days (30th June and 1st July). Specific induction lessons and bridging tasks will be set in July.

What grades are you going to suggest for my child and when will the results be published?

Ofqual have stated “Centres must not, under any circumstances, share the centre assessment grades nor the rank order of students with students, or their parents/carers or any other individuals outside the centre.” So, please do not ask.

Results will be published in the summer as planned. Year 13 students will get their A Level/BTEC results on Thursday 13th August while those awaiting GCSE/BTEC Level 2 results will get theirs on Thursday 20th August.

What will happen if we are unhappy with the grades?

Under the circumstances, the normal arrangements for reviews of marking and appeals will not apply. Ofqual states: “Students who feel that their grades from the summer do not reflect their ability will have the opportunity to take their exams in the autumn series or in summer 2021. If they choose to do this, both grades will stand.”

We trust you will recognise that we are operating within a fast moving and highly dynamic situation, with new information arriving regularly. We are determined to utilise all the time available as rushing decisions on this will not serve any of our community in the longer term.

Best wishes,

Mrs K Barter
Deputy Headteacher