



TO CARE
TO LEARN
TO ACHIEVE

BEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL
A Specialist Business and Enterprise College
with Applied Learning
Headteacher: Mrs H J Phillips

2nd March 2021

Dear Year 11 Students & Parents/Guardians

Firstly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Year 11 students for engaging with remote learning. I would also like to thank parents/guardians for your support and patience during the latest restrictions. It is greatly appreciated.

Qualifications and Grades 2021

As you may be aware, the government recently published the arrangements for awarding qualifications and grades this summer. You can read the full documents at;

GCSE Qualifications:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-how-gcse-as-and-a-level-grades-should-be-awarded-in-summer-2021/outcome/decisions-on-how-gcse-as-and-a-level-grades-will-be-determined-in-summer-2021-html>

Technical/Vocational Qualifications: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-alternative-arrangements-for-the-award-of-vtqs-and-other-general-qualifications-in-2021/outcome/decisions-on-alternative-arrangements-for-the-award-of-vtqs-and-other-general-qualifications-in-2021-html>

For convenience I have summarised the key points below;

- The **exams** planned for 2021 will **not** go ahead.
- **Students will still be awarded grades and qualifications.**
- **Schools will submit grades** to exam boards by **18th June**.
- It will be **no easier or harder** to achieve a particular grade this year **compared with previous years**.
- Grades must be supported by **evidence** of the student's attainment in each subject.
- A **range of evidence** can be used, including performance in practice exams or other assessments, and the standard of work produced **throughout the course, including work produced between now and 18th June**.
- Evidence can include work produced during face to face teaching in school or during remote learning, providing the teacher is confident it is the student's own work.
- Students should only be assessed on what they have been taught, not on any parts of the course missed due to Covid-19 restrictions.

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- In subjects where there is **coursework**, students should continue to work on this. Coursework will be marked by teachers and considered alongside other evidence when submitting grades. Students who have been unable to complete coursework due to circumstances beyond their control will not be penalised.
- Exam boards will provide some assessment material for possible use during the remainder of Year 11. These will not be compulsory but may be used by teachers to gather more evidence to support a grade.
- There will be **Quality Assurance** to ensure that a **consistent** approach is taken to determining grades **within the school**, in line with exam board instructions.
- There will also be some external Quality Assurance, with exams boards sampling the supporting evidence used by schools to determine grades.
- **GCSE Results Day will be on 12th August.**
- Students will have the right to **appeal**. If a student appeals, the supporting evidence used to determine the grade submitted by the school will be sent to the Exam Board. The Exam Board will then review the evidence and either uphold or change the grade. **If a grade is changed by the Exam Board, the original grade could be changed for either a higher or lower grade.**

What Next?

We are looking forward to welcoming all Year 11 students back in school from 8th March. It is essential that Year 11 students continue to **attend regularly** and **work hard**. The work produced between now and 18th June will form a significant part of the evidence on which grades will be based. **In other words, if students work hard during the remainder of Year 11 it will improve their chances of achieving good grades in the summer.**

Please can I ask that students and parents/guardians do not ask teachers to speculate on what grades will be submitted in the summer? Exam boards have not yet published the final guidance to be followed in each subject. Also, it will not be possible to determine grades until June, when all the evidence of student attainment has been produced, evaluated and standardised.

The **Year 11 screening** planned for March has been cancelled. These grades were due to be based on the second mock exams scheduled for late February. For obvious reasons these exams did not go ahead. At this stage, before the detailed subject guidance is available, it would be both difficult and unhelpful to collect grades. Instead, it will be more useful for teachers to focus on working with students to help them to make improvements that will maximise their chances of achieving good grades.

We will, of course, keep you informed of any further developments during the remainder of Year 11. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully

Mr P Shelton (Deputy Head)