

March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer/Student

Summer 2021 Grading

The Government and Ofqual (the qualifications, examinations and assessments regulator) have announced their plans for grading GCSEs, A Levels and Vocational & Technical Qualifications (VTQs) this summer. The guidance that schools and colleges will be required to follow is designed to ensure students receive grades that are fair and enable them to progress to the next stage of their education, employment or training. Outlined below is a summary of the key information. At the end of this letter, you will find links to an article from Ofqual explaining the arrangements for 2021 and to two helpful infographics that concisely set out the key points.

How students will be assessed

- Students will be assessed only on the curriculum content they have been taught.
- Students' grades will reflect the standard at which they are currently working (rather than predicting how they would have performed if they had sat examinations).
- Evidence from students' performance throughout their courses may be used to inform assessed grades.
- Teachers will draw on a broad range of evidence when making professional judgements about grades, and centres will tell students the evidence on which their grades will be based.
- For subjects with non-examination assessment (for example, coursework or practical components) this will be marked internally (but not moderated by the examination boards) and will provide evidence to support grading.
- The examination boards will provide schools with additional assessments (past paper questions and unpublished questions) for all subjects which they may choose to use in class to assess students' knowledge and understanding of content they have been taught.
- For students in receipt of access arrangements, these will be applied to any assessments taken during the summer term.
- GCSE and A Level Art grades will be determined entirely on portfolio work.
- Students will continue to receive an endorsement (separate to their grade) for GCSE English Language (Speaking), GCSE Modern Languages (Speaking) and A Level Sciences (Practical).

Quality Assurance

Schools and colleges will be required to implement internal quality assurance procedures to ensure that fair and reasonable academic judgement has been applied through a process involving rigorous moderation. The internal process will also be moderated by the examination boards. We will also carry out moderation and quality assurance across Exceed Academies Trust to provide another layer of professional assessment and moderation. The examination boards will only issue results once they are satisfied by the quality assurance processes we have in place, and they may make changes to grades if they determine that they are not a 'reasonable exercise of academic judgement'.



Appeals

While we hope this will not be necessary, students will be able to appeal their grades. The appeal process is initially a request to the school from the student to check for any administrative errors. If a student would like to proceed further, the school would submit an appeal to the examination board on behalf of the student. Examination boards will only amend the grade if they find that the grade awarded was not a 'reasonable exercise of academic judgement.' A grade may go up or down at appeal.

Vocational & Technical Qualifications (VTQs)

An approach similar to grading GCSEs and A levels will be adopted for VTQs such as BTECs, applying the same approach to quality assurance and moderation. Teachers will make professional judgements on the grades students will receive using a variety of evidence, including performance in tasks or assessments that have already been completed.

Results Day

GCSE/Level 2 results day will take place on Thursday 12 August 2021.

Formal examinations have been cancelled; however, it will be necessary for teachers to carry out some formal assessment of students' knowledge and understanding of the content they have been taught in order to make accurate and fair professional judgements on grades. As more information becomes available from examination boards, we will share more detail with you about the approach we will take at Appleton Academy to ensure all of our students receive the grades they deserve. In the meantime, I would ask that you all help to support and encourage our students to continue to work hard and try their best over the coming weeks.

We will, in all likelihood, hold a second Year 11 parents' evening at some point after Easter, but in the meantime, we would respectfully ask that you do not quiz subject teachers on predicted grades. At this stage, teachers have very little information about the grading process. We will also be holding one to one meetings with each Year 11 student to discuss their progress to date and their future aspirations so that we can ensure we support them with their next steps.

We hope that this information is helpful, and we will provide further updates in due course. If you have any further queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us via email: info@appletonacademy.co.uk

- [Ofqual Article - How qualifications will be awarded in 2021](#)
- [Ofqual GCSE and A-Level Grading](#)
- [Ofqual Vocational and Technical Qualifications Grading](#)

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Rachel Garlick'.

Rachel Garlick
Head of Secondary

Diane Whitehead
Deputy Headteacher
Secondary Achievement and Standards