



24th April 2021

Dear student of Year 11,

It was a pleasure to welcome you back to the academy after the Easter break and to see your determination and drive in continuing to work hard towards the qualifications which you are due to sit this Summer.

I am writing with further details of how your grades will be decided and when and how your grades will be received. All of the staff at Mayfield as well as the exam boards have taken into account how difficult it has been for you to work towards your qualifications during the pandemic both this academic year and last year. The approach for this academic year has been carefully designed to make grading as fair as possible in these unique circumstances.

Grades for GCSE and A-level qualifications this year are called 'Teacher Assessed Grades' but this does not simply mean your teachers will be able to decide your grades. Detailed guidance has been given to us by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) which we must follow (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/JCQ-Guidance-on-the-Determination-of-Grades-for-A-AS-Levels-and-GCSEs-Summer-2021.pdf>).

The JCQ have also published a guide for Students and Parents (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/JCQ-Guidance-for-Students-and-Parents-on-Summer-2021.pdf>) which may help you understand the approach further.

In order to meet the guidelines, we must publish our specific academy approach to grading on our website by 30th April in a document called our Centre Assessment Policy. This document is written for the awarding organisation or exam boards to check our approach is correct, you may also you may find this document useful in providing you with additional information about our approach.

To help you understand what will happen next the remainder of letter outline four key areas of the process.

- The evidence we will use
- How your overall grade will be decided
- How our grades will be checked or 'moderated'
- Receiving your grades and appeals

I wish each of you the best possible grades despite all of the challenging circumstances that you have faced during the pandemic. The team here at Mayfield look forward to providing you with continued advice, support and guidance. Not just in the weeks ahead, but also as you begin the next stage of your educational journey.

Yours sincerely,

Claire Taylor
Principal, Oasis Academy Mayfield

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Year 11 Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) what will happen next?

1. The evidence we will use

Unlike last year, this year a collection or basket of evidence of your actual work must be submitted in order for you to achieve a grade. This evidence has already been communicated to you before the Easter break and is available on our website if you require an additional copy. Within the collection of evidence, you will have opportunities to sit assessments this half term to bolster and decide your grade. Whilst these assessments will be classroom-based rather than in the Sports Hall, you are expected to complete the work in exam-type conditions, i.e. in silence and on your own. This is because your teachers must sign to say that all of your evidence is your own work. For this reason, work that you have completed at home is unlikely to be used to form the majority part of your evidence unless your teacher can be sure it is **your own work**.

If you would have had any special arrangements during your exams, such as a reader, scribe or extra time, you should have these in place during your final assessments. If you haven't had these in place for all of the evidence being submitted for your qualification, your teacher will note this and grade your work with this in mind.

All of the evidence submitted for your qualification should only use assessments based on topics that you have been taught. For example, any topics which you were not taught because you or your teacher were absent due to the pandemic will not be assessed. Your teachers and leaders at the academy have considered carefully what you have and haven't been taught and planned the assessments accordingly. We appreciate that these circumstances are different from student to student and we will include all information that we have been made aware of in our assessment.

2. How your overall grade will be decided

Your overall grade should then be decided as a 'best fit' for the evidence we have gathered and assessments you have completed. There is no specific formula or grade boundaries for deciding this overall grade but it should be the grade that best reflects the work you have done overall. Your teachers are skilled professionals but given the challenge of grading this year which is very different to a normal year, special training will be given by the academy, Oasis Community Learning and the exam boards themselves to make sure that your work is graded accurately and fairly. Exam boards will also supply them with additional marking guides and grade descriptors to make sure your work is graded as fairly and accurately as possible.

In a normal year there is a process to follow if you have been affected by severe personal circumstances during your exams called 'Special Consideration'. As there are no exams this year, there is no such process but if your performance while completing any of your evidence has been affected by difficulties such as a death of a close relative or illness etc. please do make your teachers aware. Ideally, they will be able to use alternative evidence from a different time in your course or potentially make a small adjustment to your grade.

Oasis Community Learning

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3. How our grades will be checked or 'moderated'

Once your teachers have graded your work, checking or 'moderation' will take place across teachers in each department to ensure that grades for every student are fair. Where there is only one subject teacher in our academy, we will use another expert teacher from Oasis Community Learning or beyond to check grades where possible. Our senior leadership team will then be responsible for moderating grades for all subjects including those with single classes or teachers. Oasis Community Learning will also help us check that our grades seem fair and accurate.

The JCQ guidance requires us to 'moderate' our grades against the usual pattern of results in previous years. This does not mean that our grades are definitely expected to match with previous data but that if they are significantly higher or lower, we have to offer a written explanation of why this is for the exam boards. We know that the achievement of students and the numbers that choose particular courses can change over time, so this should not be seen as a limit on your grade.

Once our grades are submitted to the exam boards, they will then be able to 'moderate' our grades by visiting the academy and asking to see your actual graded work. They expect to visit every school to look at least one qualification, so the quality of your work must reflect the grade that we give you. In the event that the exam board are not happy with the grading of your work, there could be a delay to your grade being achieved or your grade could be changed.

Grades are finally submitted to the exam boards on 18th June but as you'll understand from the above, there is a long and detailed process for your teachers to follow once you have completed your assessments, hence the date that you will last be able to submit work is significantly before this deadline. There may be some small administrative tasks such as signing forms that need to be completed right up until 18th June, so I ask that you are contactable until this date and available to come into the academy if necessary.

4. Receiving your grades & appeals

Whilst your teachers are allowed to share any results achieved in individual assessments, they are specifically not allowed to share with you or your parents the grades that are being submitted for you to exam boards. I do appreciate that this may be stressful but ask that you do not request this from your teachers as they are not able to share it under any circumstances. Results' days are earlier than normal this year so the period of waiting for your results is slightly shorter.

Results day is on 12th August for Year 11. We will write to you closer to the time with the specific arrangements for collecting your results but key academy staff will be on hand to support with your results and next steps.

There is an appeals process to follow should you feel that your grade does not accurately reflect your work. Initially, you appeal directly to us as an academy and we review the evidence for your grade. Should you still feel that your grade is not a fair reflection of your work for any reason, we can then submit an appeal on your behalf to the exam board who will review the evidence. There is a quick turnaround for these appeals processes should your grade stop you from progressing to sixth form or colleges, university or work. Full details of what to do next will be given to you with your results.

As was the case for last years' Year 11, there will again be a planned Autumn exam series later in 2021 should you wish to sit external exams in order to improve your grades. You will be able to sit these at Oasis Academy Mayfield should you wish to.

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