

10th March 2021

**Parents and Carers
of Year 11 Students**

Dear Parents and Carers

As you may have heard the government have announced that this years’ series of GCSE and BTEC examinations will not take place as planned and that students will be awarded grades based on Teacher Assessed Grades. The guidance states clearly that these grades must be awarded using robust evidence of examination and coursework performance and are subject to rigorous moderation and quality control processes.

Rationale –

For TQEA students it is crucial that they are awarded grades which are fair and just. These grades also need to meet the reality of student performance supported with accurate evidence of examination related material. The evidence for awarding grades at TQEA will be drawn from assessments produced in controlled conditions including GCSE controlled classroom examinations from early in Year 11, mock examinations from December, examination board coursework material and final assessments in the next few weeks. These assessments next term will provide TQEA students with two further opportunities to improve their grade to ensure a reliable and realistic picture of student performance, before the evidence is reviewed and moderated with grades being awarded.

The Process –

As a result of our ambition to ensure Year 11 students have further opportunities to add to their evidence of performance we have decided to cease the teaching of new GCSE content from this week and focus on revision. We are also committing to starting our after school Year 11 revision programme once more to support the work Year 11 students should be doing at home to prepare for the final assessments which will be held in April and May 2021. The purpose of two final assessments is to ensure TQEA students have every opportunity to evidence their performance before grades are awarded.

This table sets out the calendar for Year 11 revision and assessment at TQEA:

Date	Event
Monday March 8 th 2021	Year 11 students return to TQEA
Tuesday March 9 th 2021	Year 11 exam briefing in tutor time. Teaching of new GCSE content ceases.
Monday March 8 th – Friday March 26 th 2021	Year 11 revision period.
Monday March 29 th – Thursday April 1 st 2021	Year 11 Assessment 1 under controlled conditions.
Tuesday May 4 th – Monday May 17 th 2021	Year 11 Assessment 2 under controlled conditions.
Tuesday May 17 th – Friday June 18 th 2021	Marking, moderation and quality assurance processes prior to the awarding of grades to examination boards.
August 12th 2021	GCSE Results Day

As a result of this teaching staff will draw from a wider portfolio of evidence which will be moderated and quality assured by academy and Trust leaders. On August 12th students will receive their GCSE grades.

Communication During the Assessment and Grading Window –

Teaching staff have been briefed around acceptable communications with parents, carers and students during this period, according to Ofqual. We wish parents and carers to know that students will receive feedback and grades around each individual assessment they complete as usual, but we will refrain from giving students information about the grades they may or may not receive in their final GCSE and BTEC results before August 12th 2021. Therefore, please note that any performance data shared with parents and students will be “currently working at” performance indicators and are not predictions or final grades. Teaching staff will be using a portfolio of evidence to determine the performance of students for their final grades and this will not be based on one assessment. We ask parents and carers to respect these guidelines and refrain from contacting individual teachers to ask them for information pertaining to predictions or the likely awarding of GCSE and BTEC grades this year.

Assessment Timetables –

Your child will receive timetables of the time and date of their assessments shortly after Easter. Please ensure that your child is in school to attend after school support sessions and during assessment windows as it will benefit them and increase their opportunities to perform to the best of their ability.

Please direct any questions about these processes to Mr Armishaw, Assistant Principal for Curriculum, at: r.armishaw@tqea.org.uk.

We thank you for your support and wish Year 11 the very best for the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Neil Harding', with a stylized flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Neil Harding
Principal
The Queen Elizabeth Academy