

**Our Ref:** TZW/LTM/AKB/tdf - TAGS

March 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

**Re: Teacher Assessed Grades (TAG's) for Year 13 Students and Support Towards Final Qualifications**

Well done to all our students who have returned to school and re-engaged in their lessons magnificently well, while at the same time responding to the COVID Testing requirements which have been in place since their return. For students in Year 13, they are understandably keen to know what will be happening in the weeks ahead and how the school will be responding to allocating students' 'Teacher Assessed Grades' (TAGs) across all subjects. I have spoken to students during an assembly this week; this letter is designed to give an overview of the approach we will be taking in line with guidance across all TrustEd schools; we will keep you updated as we move forward and receive further information.

**How will TAGs be finalised:** TAGs are based on the professional judgement of teachers' taking into account any work and assessments completed covering the delivered elements of the course. These can be finalised using a combination of historical assessments and any work produced during the weeks ahead which help validate grades given. We are in a good position to do this; while students were working from home, we continued to deliver our normal schemes of work and undertake regular assessments. Mock examinations may form part of this evidence base, however it is worth noting that for Yr13 these took place open book and unsupervised. For practical and vocational based subjects, advice is being provided on how components which have either been completed or are in the process of being completed can be used to finalise grades.

**What previous work will be used to support TAGs:** Any work completed can be used as evidence, alongside work completed in the period through to submission of grades shortly after May half term. This means that students will be able to further secure and validate grades which they had previously been given and demonstrate potential improvement. It is important that all work set by teachers is completed and that students demonstrate their very best in all they do; previous 'working at' grades may move up or down based on the outcomes of work set. A holistic approach will be taken to look at a range of work, therefore no individual assessment will be solely used to allocate a final grade.

**What guidance is being given to teachers on how to allocate TAGs:** All schools have received guidance on how to approach the allocation of TAGs; the general principles are as follows:

- Teachers must assess their students' performance, only on what content has been delivered to them by their teachers, to determine the grade each student should receive.

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- Teachers can use evidence of a student's performance from throughout the course to inform their judgement.
- Teachers should determine the grades as late in the academic year as is practicable, and not confine it to a defined window, to enable teaching to continue for as long as possible.
- Schools should use a broad range of evidence across the taught content to determine the grades.
- Schools will have to confirm that students have been taught sufficient content to allow progression to the next stage of their education.
- Students should continue to work on their non-exam assessment (NEA), including for Project qualifications. NEAs will be marked by teachers and will contribute to the overall grade, whether or not it has been completed.
- In some practical subjects, the student's grade may be based on the portfolio only, requirements regarding what should be complete and included may change following exam board guidance.

**Will students sit any type of exam?** Students will complete closed book assessments in lessons, these will generally be shorter than examinations which would have taken place formally in the exam hall. These assessments will be set through Satchel One as a 'Class Test'. Students will be given at least 1 week's notice on when these will take place. Parents are encouraged to keep an eye on their parent app and discuss with their son/daughter any assessments scheduled, to support them in preparing fully. *Remember that these assessments only form part of the evidence to support allocated TAGs.*

**Do students who would normally receive support (special consideration) in examinations still receive this in any assessments?** We will ensure that all students are fully supported. Where students would normally receive additional support/access arrangements (eg. additional time, a reader, scribe or use of a laptop in examinations), opportunity will be provided for identified key pieces of work.

**How will I know what evidence is being used to support TAGs:** Teachers will be sharing with students what work will be considered when finalising TAGs; future in-class assessments will also be outlined to help students prepare. Parents will receive an overview of details for all subjects prior to the Easter Holiday. Students will be briefed by teachers on what they are being assessed on and will be able to use this information and the Easter Holidays to help them prepare work to be completed in class.

**Will the exam board be providing formal assessment work?** Additional materials will be provided by the exam boards to help teachers award grades and will be available after Easter. The use of these materials is optional for all schools so we will wait to see the nature of what is provided to school. We are extremely confident with the planning being finalised for students at our school and would consider using additional materials should they be required. The Department of Education continue to send all schools updates and so we may have to make adjustments in line with all other schools should any further updates require us to do so.

**When are results published?** Results day for A-Levels is Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> August. How results will be published will depend on the COVID restrictions in place at that time; we will update students of arrangements at the earliest opportunity. Our hope is that these can be collected from school where key staff will be on hand to provide further advice and guidance at the time.

**Will students be informed of their TAGs before the results day?** No, schools are not expected to share these grades. Where any formal assessment takes place students will be given appropriate feedback on how they have performed which may link to a level an individual

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piece of work is graded at; this does not however mean that the final grade would be in line with this as the work would only be one piece of evidence which may be considered. Final moderation of a range of work and sampling of evidence provided within school will result in final grades being allocated.

**What if a student believes their grade is wrong?** As in any other years, every student will have the right to appeal their grade. If they believe their grade is wrong, they can ask the school to check for errors. If the student still believes their grade is wrong, their centre can then submit an appeal to the exam board on their behalf. The exam board can confirm whether the grade is reasonable, based on the evidence. If not, they will determine the alternative grade. An exam board will only revise a student's grade where the evidence cannot reasonably support that grade, rather than as a result of marginal differences of opinion. Students should be aware that grades can go up or down as the result of an appeal.

**When will be the last day students are expected in school?** We are still awaiting confirmation of this. We know that grades are required to be uploaded to the exam boards by June 18<sup>th</sup>, although no further information on final dates in school have been given.

A **summary** of how grades will be allocated from OFQUAL is shown below. We will continue to speak with students and parents over the coming weeks and will be ensuring that students have the opportunity to achieve the very best outcomes.

We look forward to supporting all students through this period of time to ensure they are confident regarding final outcomes and future destinations.

**How GCSEs, AS and A levels will be awarded in summer 2021**

**Working out your grade**

- Graded by teacher judgement
- Not graded by an algorithm
- School and college assessments can continue
- You'll only be assessed on what you've been taught
- Your teacher will tell you what evidence is used to grade you
- Private candidates to work with a school, college or exam centre to provide evidence for them to be graded

**Evidence**

- Mocks, tests and work already done can be used as evidence
- Non-exam assessment should continue
- Non-exam assessments can be used as evidence even if incomplete
- Art & design grade based only on your portfolio
- Teachers can use question banks provided by exam boards if they want to
- Results will be based on completed and future work, so keep doing your best

**Results and appeals**

**Results days**  
AS and A level 10 August  
GCSE 12 August

If you're unhappy with your grade, you can appeal it. First step is to submit an appeal to your school or college.

You can find out more details from your school, college or exam board, or by visiting the Ofqual website

[www.gov.uk/ofqual](http://www.gov.uk/ofqual)

Good luck to everyone and keep working hard; should you have any questions please contact the school. We will be providing further opportunity for parents to contact staff in school and will update you on this shortly.

Yours faithfully

**Tom Williams**  
Director of Sixth Form

**April Bishell**  
Head of Sixth Form

**Lee Tristham**  
Headteacher