

Parents' Evening FAQ

The following FAQ has been written up to try and keep the conversation at the parents' evenings relating to how your son or daughter is doing, and what can be done to help them get a better grade. Hopefully looking through these standard questions and their answers will help settle your mind with key points, and allow a more purposeful parents evening to take place.

1. Why can't you give me my child's grade?

There is still a lot of the course left, we have been told that teacher generated grades will be recorded as late as possible. With this in mind there is still the time for a grade to raise or fall depending on the outcome of internal assessments. Ofqual still haven't released the process for how schools should generate grades, however the initial consultation refers to externally set tests that would influence the final grade. (also see Q6)

2. How can you ensure it's a fair process?

The process of generating teacher grades is unfortunately something that we have had to do before. We work hard to make sure that grades are fair and evidence based. There is a rigorous quality assurance process including checks by Curriculum Leaders, SLT links, the Principal and the MAT central team. On submission to the exam board grades are double checked by the exam officer (as an independent person), the CL and the Principal.

3. What if people get help in the mocks if done remotely, how is that fair?

We are working on moderation and invigilation methods to limit this as far as possible. The mocks will influence the final grade, however other key assessed pieces of work and the externally set tests (if agreed) will also be used to generate the final grade.

4. Can results be appealed by parents?

At the moment we understand that there will be an appeals process. Full details for this year have yet to be released.

5. Will exam papers be compromised if students are absent and sit later?

We are working to develop moderation and invigilation to limit this as far as possible. It may be necessary for some students to complete different assessments, however they will test the same skills and knowledge and follow the same mark scheme, moderation process. It is worth remembering that the teacher generated grade will use a range of information gathered over the whole course.

6. What will a CAG be generated from?

A teacher assessed grade will be generated using a range of information from over the two years of the course. We will follow Ofqual/government guidance once it has been agreed nationally and shared with schools. We expect this will include mock grades, key assessments, any practical &/or controlled assessments, externally set tests (if agreed by Ofqual), classwork & homework. Work produced from this point will still provide vitally important data/evidence to influence the final grade. Therefore, it is important that your son/daughter attends all lesson, engages in every task, prepares for all key assessments.

7. What if my child has been affected by an extended period of teacher absence, how can you determine the CAG is accurate & fair?

There are very few examples of this as staff absence has been so low and when it has occurred CLs have done everything possible to ensure Year 11 & 13 groups have no disruption to their learning. The students have still covered the full curriculum & exam specification and have received intervention and support for key assessments. Intervention will continue for students not making expected progress. CLs will oversee this process to determine the most accurate teacher assessed grade.

8. How will you account for gaps for some students not being able to access practical work (such as in art, dance, drama and music) due to periods of self-isolation and lockdown?

The teacher will take all the information they have about the student into consideration when working out the teacher assessed grades. Not completing every practical item of work will not disadvantage a student. The teachers know the students well and have seen the development of skills leading up to missed practical work. Some exam boards have changed their specifications to take this into account also.

9. Can my child sit the higher tier to give them a better chance of getting a higher grade?

Teachers and leaders are well practiced in setting the correct tier for students. We will continue to monitor student progress, and if the evidence supports a change the CL will oversee this process. This has to be a school decision, not one made or influenced by parents.

10. What grade will my son/daughter get? (also refer to Q1)

We are not currently in a position to give a definite grade; however, we can give you a range of grades that I think they should achieve if they continue to work as they are doing currently.

11. I have paid for a tutor who is still working with my son/daughter, they say that the grade that will be obtained is higher than the one you are predicting.

It's important that we follow government guidance, therefore we will only take into account evidence from tasks set by the school. The guidance is clear that the teacher is best placed to provide the most accurate grade.

12. When will you be able to tell me what grade my son or daughter has achieved?

Pupils will find their grades out on GCSE or A Level results day, these are currently 24th Aug for A level and 27th Aug for GCSE.

13. My son / daughter has done really well in the coursework can I expect a good grade now to be provided by the teacher?

Coursework weighting changes by subject, it will be taken into account according to this weighting. The accompanying theory work is also important and will be used in line with exam board specification. No grades can be guaranteed at this stage.

14. I don't think you have enough information to be able to provide an accurate grade for my son or daughter.

Teachers have worked hard over the last two years to collect information; this may not always have been shared with the pupils. We will continue to collect relevant information and evidence until the course finishes. We are confident that we will have enough information to generate accurate and fair teacher assessed grades in line with government guidelines.

15. What can I do to support my son or daughter get a better grade?

For the rest of the year, including this period of remote learning it is important that they study as normal engaging with the teacher and the work. We will continue to support all students, and share strategies with you to help.

16. I have downloaded and have been doing past exam papers it shows they are capable of a higher grade.

Teachers will have undertaken and continue to undertake a similar process. They will conduct these in fair and controlled environments. The grades generated will be used in conjunction with other grades and information. Time spent doing past exam papers at home will never be wasted. The guidance is clear that the teacher is best placed to provide the most accurate grade.