Dear Parents

**Teacher Assessed Grades - 2021**

I am writing to you with initial information related to how we will be awarding grades for GCSE, BTEC and A Level qualifications this year. This letter outlines for you and your child the guidance that schools have received from the Department of Education and howe we intend to ensure a transparent and consistent approach. Our underlying principle is that we intend to do the very best for every student in each of their subjects. Further information can be gleaned from the accompanying six-minute video link: [JFS TAGs - a video guide](https://youtu.be/njp_bnGnubA)

For those of you who had children in years 11 and 13 last year (2020) please note that the premise upon which grades will be awarded this year is different and there is completely new guidance.

For GCSE, BTEC courses and A Levels, teachers are being asked to award a grade which reflects *“the standard at which the student is performing now, not their potential…. and that the grade should indicate the student’s demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills”.* It is important that teachers have the evidence on which to award a grade and that students are graded on work that has been taught.

**Overview**

From the guidance:

1. 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.
2. Teachers can use evidence of a student’s performance from throughout the course to inform their judgement.
3. Teachers should determine the grades as late in the academic year as is practicable, and not confined to a defined window, to enable teaching to continue for as long as possible.
4. Schools and colleges should use a broad range of evidence across the taught content to determine the grades before submitting the grades to the exam boards.
5. 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, but we will not require exam boards to moderate it.

The full guidance can be found here:

[Decisions on how GCSE, AS and A level grades will be determined in summer 2021](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/964597/6747-1_decisions_-_GQ_consultation_on_awarding_grades_in_2021.pdf) and here [Government Publications - Awarding qualifications in summer 2021](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/awarding-qualifications-in-summer-2021)

The following also gives a helpful summary:

[Infographic - how GCSEs AS and A levels will be awarded in summer 2021](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/964613/Infographic_-_how_GCSEs__AS_and_A_levels_will_be_awarded_in_summer_2021.pdf)

Exam boards are due to publish support material at the end of the Spring Term which may be used by schools for future assessments.

The principles above apply to the BTEC courses being taught at JFS.

**What does this mean for your child at JFS?**

In order to ensure teachers can assess students fairly, we will cease teaching new material at the end of this term (Tuesday 23rd March). This will allow time for completion of Non Exam Assessment (NEA) work, revision and consolidation of taught material.

**Assessments**

In April and May, we will be holding assessments for each subject. These will take place in classrooms and will complement a range of evidence already available for teachers.

**Length of and Timetable for assessments**

Assessment 1 April

45-minute long assessments (KS4 & KS5) (1 hour for extra time students)

Assessment 2 May

45-minute long assessments (KS4) (1 hour for extra time students)

75-minute long assessments (KS5) (1.5 hour for extra time students)

Each assessment window will be timetabled across six school days to ensure that, with only few exceptions, no student sits more than two assessments on any day. (Maximum of three where a clash is unavoidable).

There will be one paper per subject in each assessment window, except for Key Stage 4 Science, where there will be one paper each for Biology, Chemistry and Physics regardless of whether your child was studying for the Double or Triple Award.

Art students will have specific drop down days where they will be able to complete portfolio work and will be advised of the timetable by the Art department. There will be no formal art examinations.

**How will students be prepared**

Lessons leading up to each assessment week will focus on preparing students for the test in that assessment window. Before the end of this term, you will receive a further letter that will include the following information:

1. The timetable for each assessment window
2. The topics that students will need to revise in each subject and for each assessment
3. The list of evidence that the teachers in each department will use to determine your grade in their subject

**Will there be Study Leave?**

There will not be any traditional study leave this year. As stated above, students will be prepared in class for assessments and during the assessment weeks will be able to study in class.

**Last Day of School for Years 11 and 13**

We are yet to be advised by the Department of Education as to the last day for Year 11 and Year 13 students. We will write to you after Pesach with this information. However, please note that students will be in school beyond the leaving dates published in the school calendar.

As we did last year, we will be exploring a programme of bridging work preparing Year 11 students for A Levels starting in September.

**When are exam results?**

Results will be published earlier than in previous years to support your child in the next stages of their education.

Results will be published on:

Tuesday 10th August A Levels

Thursday 12th August GCSE

Results will be shared with students electronically with support available onsite for those who may need. Again, we will write to you closer to the time with arrangements.

**Can I appeal a grade?**

Yes. Every student will have the right to appeal their grade if they so wish. If a student wishes to appeal, the school will undertake an initial review to check all processes were followed correctly and no errors were made. If the school finds an error, we can submit a revised grade to the exam board or, if you still want to appeal, you can ask JFS to submit a formal appeal to the exam board. Results can go down as well as up on appeal. We will share further details closer to the time.

**Overview Timeframe**

March Return to school

Complete taught materials

April Revision, consolidation, completion of NEA

April assessment

May Revision, consolidation, completion of NEA

May assessment

June Internal quality assurance

18th June – all data to be submitted to the exam board.

**Summary**

We appreciate that this is an uncertain time. As mentioned above, we will be writing to you again with further information before the end of the Spring Term regarding the dates of the assessments and the specific content that students will need to prepare for.

The assessments planned for April and May are an opportunity for your child to demonstrate their progress. Our aim is to use the evidence available that reflects the best of each student’s ability in each of their subjects.

Kind regards

**Rachel Fink**

**Headteacher**