

24 March 2021

Dear Families and Students

GCSE and A Level Grades 2021

We are delighted that our students have returned to school and can now prepare better for the next stage of their education.

As a result of the disruption to students caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the government considers exams cannot be held in summer 2021 in a way which is, and which is perceived to be, fair. As a result, it will be necessary for schools to determine GCSE, AS and A Level grades this year.

Schools have been asked to create internally assessed grades and submit these to the exam boards. These grades need to reflect a fair, reasonable, and carefully considered judgement of a students' performance, and only on the content that has been delivered to them by their teachers. As a Trust, we always act with integrity and will follow a consistent and fair process at all academies. This will ensure that no student attending a Dixons academy will be unfairly disadvantaged by the system that is in place.

For teachers to be supported in this process we are going to use the materials provided by the exam boards, alongside our own materials, to create an assessment series for our students. This assessment series will take place across April and May and will form a significant part of the evidence staff will use to arrive at a final grade for your child.

Whilst this series of assessments will provide one of the forms of evidence, teachers will also collate other evidence in line with exam board guidance. This evidence will only include work produced in tasks devised in the academy that reflect the exam specification, follow the same format as exam board materials and have been marked in a way that reflects exam board mark schemes. The guidance stipulates that work completed needs to be the student's own work and that the student has not received inappropriate levels of support. Therefore, work completed outside of school will not be accepted as a form of evidence, unless it is coursework for vocational qualifications.

Subjects across our academies have worked together to create a list of the evidence sources. These will be communicated to you, alongside an assessment timetable, in due course.

It is imperative that your child prepares for these assessments and attends school every day. If the range of evidence produced by your child does not reflect the expected standard for a grade, it will be difficult for teachers to award this grade.

If your child is eligible for reasonable adjustments, these will be taken into consideration when assessing all forms of evidence.

Please rest assured that all staff across our academies want the best possible results for our students. When arriving at a judgement, we will ensure it is no easier or harder for a student to achieve a particular grade this year compared to previous years. With this in mind, please do not contact teachers to ask for grades before they are officially released or to offer alternative sources of evidence.

As always, thank you for your ongoing support and I offer you and your family my warmest regards.

Yours sincerely



Sir Nick Weller
CEO