



31st March 2021

Dear Year 11 and 13 Parents/Carers

Update: Summer Grading

We received full information from JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) last Friday, so are now able to confirm the process through which students will be awarded grades at Waddesdon this summer. We continue to recognise the stress students have been under due to all the uncertainty, so we hope the process outlined below gives students reassurance, clarity and certainty moving forwards. Rest assured, we will be working hard to support students during the coming weeks, both academically and with their wellbeing.

For JCQ Guidance for Parents, Guardians and Students, please see here:

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/JCQ-Guidance-for-Students-and-Parents-on-Summer-2021.pdf>

What are our guiding principles at Waddesdon in determining grades?

- **Opportunity** – students should have the best opportunity to show us what they can do, so that they are set up for success;
- **Fairness** - the grades each student receives should be a reflection of ability and work;
- **Clarity and simplicity** – we want the process to be clear and easily understood;
- **Transparency** – we will be open about why and what we are doing;
- **Achievement** – we want our students to have a sense of satisfaction as well as being provided with strong foundations for their next steps.

How will the grading process work at Waddesdon?

Most subjects will set summer assessments over a three-week period beginning Tuesday 3rd May. These assessments will take place in timed conditions in the Sports Hall so we can ensure a silent, calm and uninterrupted space, along with access arrangements and extra time. Along with any NEA coursework, these assessments will form the main basis of the grade awarded in each subject. They will be in a similar format to previous mock assessments and past exam questions completed in class. We believe it is important for students to complete these at the end of Year 11/13 when they are at the peak of their academic maturity to give them the best opportunity to show us what they can do. Students will receive their individual assessment timetables as soon as possible.

As a safety net for all students, the results of these summer assessments will be checked against their mock assessment results and any previous past paper questions completed in supervised conditions in class.

What is the difference between these summer assessments and normal exams?

Teachers will be setting the assessment papers, based on what the students have been taught. Papers will be written, based on exam board materials, to give students the best chance of

achieving the grade they deserve, if they have worked hard. Papers will be shorter in length and more focused in terms of content. Lessons in the fortnight after Easter will enable students to prepare. If a student's performance is unexpected (against mock and previous past paper exam data), we may use this data as a safety net to help determine the student's grade.

How will Waddesdon get the awarding of grades right?

Although schools will be taking slightly different approaches, all of us are working under the same regulations and guidance. We have checked our process very carefully against JCQ, Ofqual, Exam Board and ASCL information. Where necessary, we will work with other schools to moderate and quality assure our judgements. We will also be using assessment material produced by the exam boards. JCQ and the exam boards will be performing checks on our school grading policy and the evidence we use for each student to make our judgments.

What if my son/daughter is not happy with his/her final grade(s) in August?

There are two grounds upon which you can appeal:

- If you think there has been an administrative error
- If you feel that the grade(s) that have been awarded are unfair, unjust and have not followed the process set out within the official guidance. In this instance, you will be able to appeal to the examination board. They will review the evidence and process we have used to issue the grade. They may choose to move grades down as well as up.

There will be an opportunity to take examinations during an Autumn series.

What can students do now to ensure the strongest grades possible?

- Continue to work hard and take responsibility – they can't put pressure on teachers to change or improve grades as exam boards consider this malpractice;
- Set up a revision programme for Easter and stick to it – students have been issued with a revision planner in assembly;
- Put mock feedback into action;
- Keep calm and positive – teachers are working hard to support students and are willing them on.

What are the key dates?

Date	Event
Week of 5 th April	Easter Holidays – independent student revision
Week of 12 th April	
Week of 19 th April	Fortnight of lessons focused on assessment preparation
Week of 26 th April	
Week of 3 rd May	Year 11 and 13 Assessment Weeks – when not completing assessments, students will be in lessons either revising with their teacher for an upcoming assessment or working on independent revision for another subject
Week of 10 th May	
Week of 17 th May	
Week of 24 th May	NEA and Year 12 Assessment Week (Applied Science, Food Science & Finance)
Week of 31 st May	May Half Term
10 th August / 12 th August	A level Results Day / GCSE Results Day

We have explained the information above to students in assembly. We will be in contact with further details next term, but if you have any questions in the meantime, please don't hesitate to get in contact. At present, we are not able to confirm the final dates for Year 11 and 13, but will do so shortly.

Yours sincerely

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