



Letter No: 94/2021

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Date: 26th February 2021

Dear Students (Parents and Carers),

RE: GCSE/BTEC/A-level qualifications 2021

You will have seen on the news that Ofqual released the results of their consultation yesterday, to provide direction on the process to be used in awarding GCSE/BTEC and A-level qualifications this summer in place of terminal examinations. Their overarching aims are that students can get their grades and move onto their next stage of education, employment or training and that these grades are widely understood and respected.

The details below outline the key elements of the assessment process to determine and award your grades fairly and consistently both within Sandringham and across schools. The attached infographics also provide useful 'at a glance' summaries. You might also wish to read [this article](#) written by Ofqual especially for you.

Timelines:

- Sandringham will need to submit your grades to the exam boards by 18 June
- A level results will be published on 10 August
- GCSE results will be published on 12 August
- Vocational results will be published at the same time

How your grades will be determined:

We have reviewed our plans following the announcement yesterday, and finalised a way forward for how Sandringham will award grades to students. The process fits with our previously communicated plans to you.

The most important thing is for you to have confidence in the system and confidence in us to support you through it. I feel the Department for Education and Ofqual have listened to the thousands of responses to their consultation, and arrived at a way forward that is fair to you. This is a different way of assessing you from sitting examinations, and in many ways, this will be advantageous since you will have multiple opportunities to evidence your performance rather than simply in a series of examinations this summer. I must stress that we have four months ahead where you can demonstrate your performance to us and these will be critical in helping to finalise your overall grade per subject.



The key points that will guide you through the process are:

- We will only use **evidence of your performance** in assessing the standards at which you are performing and in preparing final grades in each of your subjects.
- The award of grades will be based on teacher assessments with no use of an algorithm.
- Only content that has been delivered to you will be assessed.
- We will use the full range of evidence available. This evidence may include any of the work listed below, but the school will need to be confident that it is your own unaided work and you have not been given inappropriate levels of support either at home or from tutors.
- The evidence can be taken from any point in the course, but it is expected that more recent evidence is likely to be more representative of your achievement. The evidence base could include:
 - work produced in class or at home (including remote learning, where the school is confident it is your own, unaided work). This would be expected to be similar in format to exam board material and marked using exam board mark schemes
 - tests and mock exams taken over the course of study, including between now and the end of the course
 - work produced in response to the additional assessment materials (mini tests) to be provided by the exam board
 - non-exam assessment (NEA) work even if this has not been fully completed
 - records of your capability and performance over the course of study in performance-based subjects such as music, drama and PE
- Where you require access arrangements or reasonable adjustments, these will be taken into account as usual.
- *Work already completed:* Each subject area will use a range of evidence of your performance since the start of your courses, from those listed above.
- *Future assessed work:* There will be **two further internal assessments(tests)** for you to take, in addition to any assessments given in the normal rhythm of teaching in your classes. The first (**internal assessment 1**) will be immediately after Easter, and the second (**internal assessment 2**) in the last two weeks before the summer half term. You will be provided with information on the topic areas that they will focus on and a timetable for when and where you will take these. The topic areas for internal assessment 1 will be communicated to you before the end of next week. You will receive a full timetable of when and where you will sit these assessments before the end of term. The topic areas for internal assessment 2 will be provided after Easter.



- Your teachers will be supported to arrive at grades using exam board guidance and exemplars.
- You should aim to do your very best in both NEAs and all assessments as both will contribute to the final grade awarded to you.
- Our aim will be to form a holistic judgement on your performance from the above in reaching a conclusion on your final awarded grade per subject.
- You will know which evidence is being used to assess you but you will not be told the grade in advance of results day.

How the school and the exam boards will ensure the grades are fair:

- We will have internal quality assurance systems (including moderation) and checking of grades before they are submitted.
- This internal quality assurance will also include consideration of Sandringham's profile of results in previous years as a guide to help check that judgements are not unduly harsh or lenient.
- Exam boards will review our quality assurance processes before grades are submitted.
- Once grades are submitted, the exam board will conduct various checks to make sure grades submitted are fair and consistent across centres. This will include sampling of evidence.
- If there are concerns with the grades submitted, the exam board will work with the school to address this before results day. (Exam boards will not 'remark' the work).

Appeals and re-takes:

- There will be an appeals process and you may be able to undertake examinations in an autumn series if you wish. *It is worth remembering that in any appeals process, results can go down as well as up. The appeals will be conducted by the exam boards who do not know you as well as we do, and may not have the same holistic view on your performance. This may mean it is more likely that an appeal would go down rather than up.*

Next steps:

We will not be able to enter into conversation with you, your parents or carers about the grades we will submit. Therefore, we would be grateful if you would avoid contacting subject teachers with specific queries about grades, because they will be unable to answer these questions.



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For now, it is essential that you continue to work hard, complete all work set by your teachers and respond to feedback so that the final evidence base shows your very best achievements and that you can receive the grades you deserve.

The school has to submit your grades by Friday 18th June and you may be required to complete any additional assessments up until this deadline.

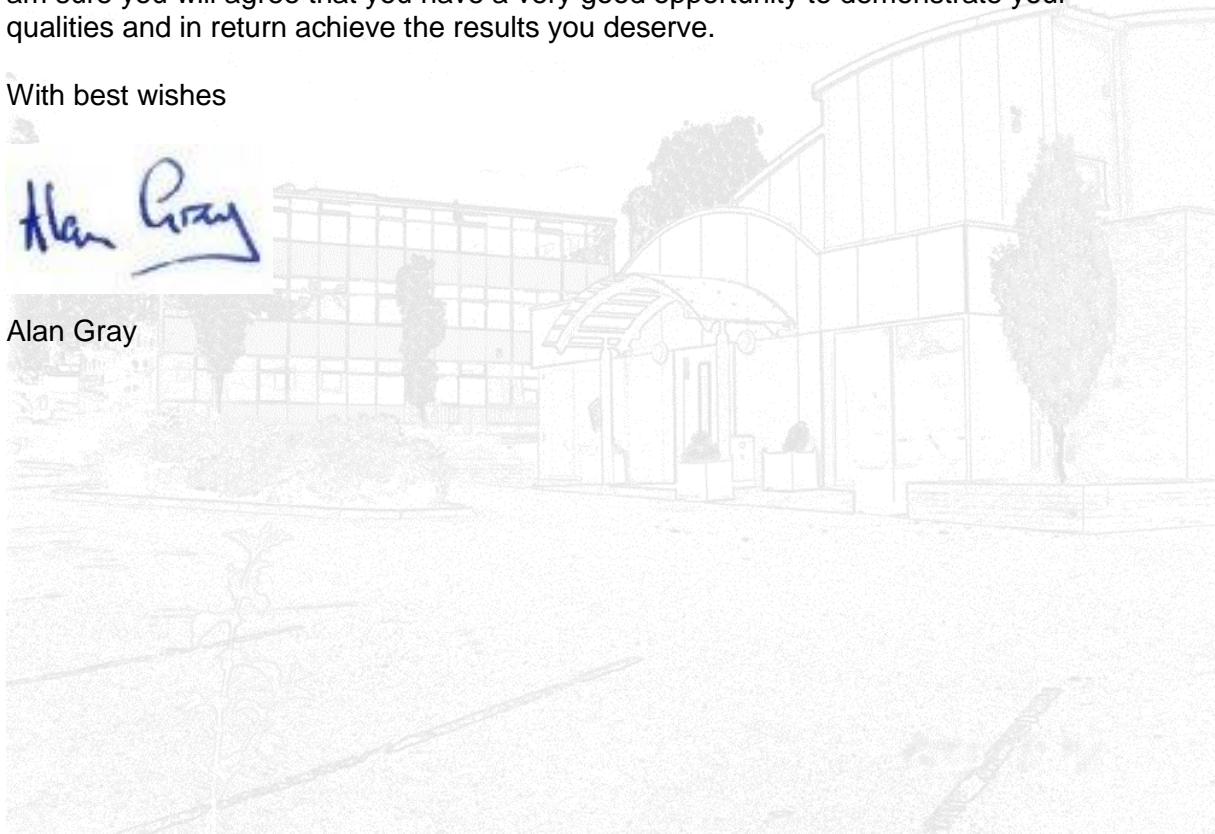
I hope this provides a clear direction of travel and helps you to navigate through the remainder of your courses.

As I outlined at the beginning of this letter, whilst this is a very different process to normal examination years, and indeed last year where predicted grades were issued, I am sure you will agree that you have a very good opportunity to demonstrate your qualities and in return achieve the results you deserve.

With best wishes



Alan Gray



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