



19 January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Update COVID-19 Ofqual DfE consultation on exams 2021

I writing to let you know that the Department for Education (DfE) and Ofqual, on Friday 15 January 2021, published a consultation document which you can access using the following link:

[Consultation on how GCSE, AS and A level grades should be awarded in summer 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/consultation-on-how-gcse-as-and-a-level-grades-should-be-awarded-in-summer-2021)

The consultation outlines a set of proposals for the award of grades at KS4 and KS5 for summer 2021. I am sharing this information with you as the DfE have stated:

"We want to hear the views of students who were due to take their exams, their parents and carers, their teachers, school and college leaders and others who have an interest, including further and higher education providers, and employers.

The Department for Education is putting our trust in teachers and their judgement to determine grades. Grades will be based on teacher assessment, with teachers supported in making decisions with guidance and training from exam boards to ensure these are awarded fairly and consistently.

The consultation will consider the range of evidence teachers use to award a grade, which could include coursework, other forms of assessment and papers provided by exam boards, to support consistency and fairness across schools and colleges."

The period of time for responses to the consultation ends on 29 January 2021; although this is a tight turnaround, it is important that there is the opportunity to make views known and offer suggestions to the DfE with enough time then for a final report on the consultation, training by exam boards and systems of support for schools and colleges to be in place.

It is important that all pupils continue to work on Microsoft Teams as this will support both future assessments and externally set tasks. There are a great number of unknowns, but the consultation provides an opportunity to have voices heard.

Vocational Examinations

You may well be aware that at the beginning of term, it was announced that Headteachers/Principals could take the decision whether to cancel or continue with the planned examinations for BTEC subjects. We took the decision to continue with the examinations as we felt it was only fair on our pupils/students who have studied and prepared for the examinations. Around this time, many colleges had taken the decision to cancel their examinations. Recently, it has been decided by examination boards that all vocational examinations have also been cancelled from February 2021 in line with the national decision to cancel GCSE and A Levels; on demand examinations will continue in January 2021.

I appreciate this is an anxious time for pupils/students who still do not have clarity on how grades will be awarded and what an assessment system will be for summer 2021. I have sent the consultation information to all members of staff so that we may all have some influence on a decision that considers what is best for pupils/students.

Yours sincerely

Ian Morrel
Headteacher